A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.

JACQUES BARZUN

Open University

It's time to liberate our classrooms

A few IITs and IIMs do not make an educational summer. The 21st century is supposed to be all about human capital, but India doesn't yet have a coherent plan for its development, or for meeting the thirst for quality education that exists — leading to Indians spending as much as $3 billion annually to study abroad. And the HRD ministry is the biggest roadblock in this regard. The commerce ministry proposed recently to the WTO to open the Indian educational sector to foreign providers, but HRD has been opposing this tooth and nail. Its plea is that the domestic education sector must be protected. In keeping with this mindset it has proposed the Foreign Education Providers Regulation Bill, which bristles with archaic regulations designed to keep foreigners out. But this sort of protectionist thinking has become outmoded in other sectors, where we are waking up to the realisation that trade is a revolving door. If foreigners export to us, we can do the same to them too. This is particularly true of education — if anything, the Indian affinity for it gives us a competitive edge if we dare to throw open our classrooms. The Varkey group, set up by a PIO entrepreneur, has already established a large chain of successful schools in the UAE and expanded to the UK. Delhi Public School has branches in Los Angeles, New York and Washington DC. There's no reason why IIMs can't set up in Singapore or Bangkok and run profitable branches there, if allowed.

Indians are now dealing with the world confidently. If there's need to clear mental cobwebs inherited from the past, this is particularly so for education. It does not prosper if restricted to an artificial, hothouse environment. But if fully opened up to private and foreign investment, it can take on the world. From losing $3 billion annually it could become a net foreign exchange earner for the country. But that's only the icing on the cake. The real cake is that an upgraded educational system is needed to maintain Indian advantages in the global services sector, where skill shortages are currently leading to high labour costs that could cause companies to ship elsewhere. Even in case of industry and agriculture, an educated workforce helps enormously in enhancing productivity. On a human level, education becomes less alienating if one learns useful skills at the end of it instead of just earning a paper degree. Indian students now commit suicide at a rate rivalling that of farmers. If they don't get that much attention it is because education isn't yet a political issue in India, retrograde experiments with reservation aside. It's high time it became one.

Deadening Routine

Schools are far removed from the real world

Krishna Kumar

Let us assume that India is about to become a knowledge society. That will be fine indeed, but is India also going to become an understanding society? The question occurred to me while watching Avinash Deshpande's hour-long documentary, The Great Indian School Show. It is an unusual film, in that it uses the routine footage of a real school which has installed 185 close-circuit video cameras (CCVC) to observe every move that children and teachers make. From the central control room, the principal has access to every classroom desk, galleries and the playground. The film juxtaposes this Big Brother-style control system with the banality of what is taught.

The ironical truth, Deshpande reveals, is that the vast system of surveillance turns up nothing new because the school was already intellectually dead. The main rationale given by the principal and staff in favour of the camera system is that it will improve discipline. They say that while 95 per cent of discipline problems were already under control, the CCVC has resolved the remaining 5 per cent. As we watch the faces of children in different classes, we are filled with the horror of intellectual death at an early age.

The dull daily lessons, vacuous discourses and children's complaints deepen our depression even as we laugh at the banality of routine at a hi-tech school. This is not the story of just one school. In our system, a vast gap separates the life children lead at school and what they experience outside. The space where they are supposed to learn about life is so far removed from reality that we might as well ask parents to buy space suits for their little ones, instead of school uniforms. What they read, listen to and copy from the blackboard is so meticulously deodorised and sanctified that it carries no resonance of experienced reality and applicability in life.

The school day becomes a ritual of didactic songs and memorised information. Special occasions are marked by elaborate acts of sycophancy and preaching. School authorities seldom stop talking about values, but ignore the cynicism felt by the young over the high levels of chicanery and verbosity they find in adult talk. The one-way discourse of the teacher and text merely convinces the young that it is pointless to open up in front of adults, and knowledge has no meaning beyond examinations. Marks become the only value, and values which are supposed to arise in the heart die.

Few people realise that values are nurtured when we allow a candid intellectual encounter with experience. The responsibility a school has in this respect is enormous — to provide a space where children can freely analyse and examine what they see in the world. A meaningful curriculum takes shape when teachers assist children in this process, acting as accessible, gentle guides. This idea of a school is far removed from government as well as most private schools. In their search for status, the richer private schools install every conceivable facility, falling in the trap of what sociologist Dipankar Gupta has called mistaken modernity. With swimming pools, air-conditioned meditation rooms and conference halls fit for a five-star hotel, they reassure the hurried parent that their child will become globally competitive. They overlook the simple fact that creativity of the young does not blossom in excessively designed and controlling spaces. Operating with the colonial mindset that knowledge is an object to be possessed, private schools fail as much as state schools do in promoting creative thought and understanding. The difference lies in the care that private schools take in hiding the daily intellectual genocide and showcasing recalcitrant exceptions.



September 5 is observed as Teachers' Day in memory of philosopher-president S Radhakrishnan. Let us use it to introspect and examine why the profession of teaching has ceased to attract the young. Poor emoluments are one reason, but a weightier reason is the widespread pessimism about the possibility of reform. Every step taken is politicised and instantly invokes screaming headlines and polarised debates. Texts yet to be prepared and those on their way out are attacked. Good efforts are overlooked. The public is loudly told that there is no good news, only more politics. Raging debates ignore the humble teacher who marches on, enduring the ignorance and callousness of society towards children.

The National Curriculum Framework recommends greater autonomy for teachers and plurality of pedagogic material as a long-term strategy to give greater choice and to improve the examination system, which at present is tied to prescribed textbooks. A school-based system of evaluation could be a reality in a decade from now if reforms are encouraged. Certification by boards will focus on competencies rather than memorised texts. Schools will participate in curricular choice and design. Even now, DAV schools are showing the way in making responsible choices. There is no reason why multiple alternatives cannot be provided for classroom material and teachers are trained for intellectual leadership in place of exam-oriented teaching. Faced with a complex, confusing, and sometimes threatening world, children want their teachers to act as allies, interpreting the world to make it comprehensible. They want to live vibrantly, not like terrorised ostriches.

The writer is director, NCERT.

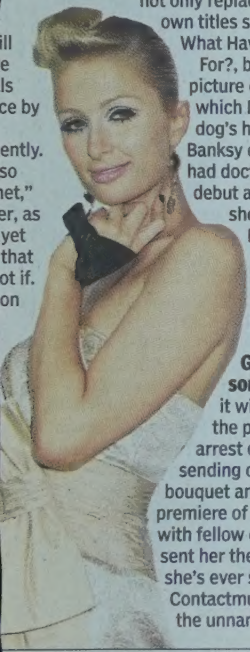
Expand the Net

'India should give Canada priority in trade'



Klum, hubby Seal take turns being the boss

German supermodel Heidi Klum and hubby Seal have revealed the secret to making marriages work. They insist when it comes to making a relationship last, both partners need to take time being "the boss". With busy careers and two children, with another on the way, British singer Seal insists that taking turns being the 'boss' in the house is what sustains their relationship. "One time she is the boss, another time I call the shots. We have two kids and have a third on the way. We have to make sure that our relationship endures," Contactmusic quoted him as saying.



not only replaced song names with his own titles such as Why am I Famous?, What Have I Done? and What Am I For?, but has also changed her picture on the CD sleeve, thanks to which Paris is now topless, with a dog's head. A spokeswoman for Banksy confirmed that the artist had doctored 500 copies of Hiltons debut album Paris in 48 record shops across the UK. As Banksy left the original barcode so people could buy the CD without realising it had been interfered with.

Gibson's goes flowery, says sorry to cops: Mel Gibson said it with flowers, apologising to the police officers involved in his arrest on drunken driving charges, sending one female officer a $500 bouquet and inviting her to attend the premiere of his new movie *Apocalypto* with fellow officer James Mee. "Mel has sent her the biggest bunch of flowers she's ever seen with a note," Contactmusic quoted a colleague of the unnamed female officer.

Irwin was victim of 'voyeuristic TV'

Was Slammed Once For Feeding A Crocodile While Holding His One-Month-Old Baby Son

AP



Steve Irwin and his wife Terri pose with an albino Burmese python in Las Vegas

Crocodile hunter Steve Irwin—killed by a stingray barb through the chest— was a victim of "voyeuristic wildlife TV", fellow experts said on Monday.

As tributes poured in for the quirky 44-year-old, survival expert Ray Mears said his death was a "sobering lesson". Mears said the Australian's death was a tragedy and his heart went out to his family. But he added that it proved "some things in nature should be left alone."

He said, "He clearly took a lot of risks and television encouraged him to do that. It's a shame that television audiences need that to be attracted to wildlife. Dangerous animals, you leave them alone because they will defend themselves. Nature defends itself, it isn't all about hugging animals and going 'ahh'. It's wonderful to observe but you have to be sensible and maintain a safe distance." Mears warned of the "gladiatorial" television of today and labelled some wildlife shows "voyeuristic." He continued, "Television has become very gladiatorial and it's not healthy. The voyeurism we are seeing on television has a cost and it's that cost Steve Irwin's family are paying today."

David Bellamy called him "one of the great showmen and conservationists" and wildlife expert Mark O'Shea said it would leave an "immense hole" in the worlds of conservation and television.

While popular with television audiences the world over, Irwin also courted controversy. In 2004, he was widely condemned for feeding a snapping crocodile at his zoo while holding his then one-month-old baby son. Later the same year, he was also criticised for disturbing whales, seals and penguins while filming in Antarctica. He was later cleared of any wrongdoing by the Australian government's environment department.

Irwin, who caught his first crocodile at the age of nine, had many close calls with rare and dangerous animals, crawling through forests and rivers around the world. He boasted that he had never been bitten by a venomous snake or seriously bitten by a crocodile, although admitted his worst injuries had been inflicted by parrots. DAILY MAIL & REUTERS

THE TIMES GROUP

TENDER FOR SALE OF NEWSPRINT WASTE, PRESS GARBAGE AND PRODUCTION SCRAP ITEMS

TENDER NO - 4/2006

SEALED TENDERS ARE INVITED FOR THE SALE OF FOLLOWING ITEMS ON 'AS IS WHERE IS' BASIS AVAILABLE FROM OUR SUBURBAN PRESS, **KANDIVALI AND AIROLI.**

ITEM NO. 1 NEWSPRINT WASTE ITMES SUCH AS PRINTED WASTE (APPROX. QTY = **800 MT**), UNPRINTED TEAR OFF (APPROX.QTY = **30 MT**), REELENDS SNP WHITE AND PINK (APPROX.QTY = **200 MT**), LWC & GLAZED REELENDS (APPROX.QTY = **10 MT**) AND OTHER WASTE ITMES FOR THE PERIOD OCT TO DEC 2006 FROM KANDIVLI & AIROLI.

ITME NO. 2 PRESS GARBAGE CONSISTING OF SWEEPINGS, OLD RECORDS, CORRUGATED BOXES, USED CARBON PAPER ETC. BUT EXCLUDING OIL SOAKED CHEESE CLOTH ON WEIGHT BASIS FOR THE PERIOD OCT TO DEC 2006 (APPROX.QTY = **65 MT** PER MONTH) FROM KANDIVLI & AIROLI.

ITEM NO. 3 PRODUCTION RELATED SCARP ITEMS SUCH AS USED NEGATIVE & POSITIVE FILMS, OFFSET ALUMINIUM PLATES, EMPTY G.I. AND PLASTIC CANS AND BUCKETS, HYPO SOLUTION, RUBBER BLANKETS, DIRTY OIL WITH DRUMS, EMPTY OIL AND GREASE DRUMS, PLASTIC STRAPPING ROLL WITH CORE, OFFSET INK, CORE PLUGS, WOODEN SCRAP, PLASTIC DRUMS, ETC. FOR THE PERIOD OCT TO DEC 2006 FROM KANDIVLI & AIROLI.

DETAILED INSPECTION OF MATERIALS & TENDER FORMS AND CONDITIONS OF PURCHASE CAN BE HAD FREE FROM K. VIJAYAKUMAR, THE TIMES OF INDIA SUBURBAN PRESS, BUSINESS & COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT, WESTERN EXPRESS HIGHWAY, AKURLI ROAD, NEAR PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE, KANDIVLI (EAST), MUMBAI-400 101, FROM 05TH SEP TO 9TH SEP 2006, BETWEEN 2.30 AND 3.30 P.M. ONLY.

INTERESTED PARTIES MAY SEND IN THEIR SEALED TENDERS ACCOMPANIED BY DD/PAY ORDER FOR RS. 45,000/- FOR ITEM NO.1 (2) RS. 50,000/- FOR ITEM NO.2 AND (3) RS. 50,000/- FOR ITEM NO. 3, BEING EMD DRAWN ON M/S. BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD., PAYABLE AT MUMBAI ADDRESSED TO BRANCH HEAD, BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD., THE TIMES OF INDIA SUBURBAN PRESS, WESTERN EXPRESS HIGHWAY, AKURLI ROAD, NEAR PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE, KANDIVLI (EAST), MUMBAI-400 101. THE TENDERS SHOULD REACH US LATEST BY 5 PM ON 09-09-2006. THE TENDERS WILL BE OPENED ON 11-09-2006 & NEGOTIATED ON 12-09-2006 BETWEEN 2.00 PM TO 5.00 PM ONLY.

THE SUPPLY AGAINST THE ACCEPTED TENDERS WILL COMMENCE FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2006 ONWARDS. THE COMPANY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL TENDERS WITHOUT ASSIGNING ANY REASON THEREOF.

SD/-

SALE ON "AS-IS-WHERE IS BASIS" OF WATER DAMAGED- COTTON BALES AND COTTON YARN

Sealed tenders are invited from the buyers for the disposal, strictly on "AS-IS-WHERE IS" basis with all defect of water damaged finished cotton yarn cones of different counts in water damaged condition lying at M/S Bhaskar Industries Ltd. Mandi deep Industrial Area, Bhopal (MP)

Tender documents can be obtained By Post/in person on payment of Rs. 100/- Cash/Draft from above site or from:

M/S. BHASKAR INDUSTRIES LTD
Plot No. 15/1 6, Sector-D, Industrial Area. Mandideep,

DIRECTORATE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION, MAHARASHTRA STATE

3, Mahapalika Marg, Post Box No. 1967, Mumbai 400 001.
Help Line Phone Nos. (022) 22626853/54, FAX:22692102
E-Mail :desk2a@dte.org.in Internet :http://www.dte.org.in

Engineering/Technology ADMISSION NOTIFICATION

No.2A/ADM/FE CAP IV/2006/1516
Date:- 2nd Sept., 2006

Fourth Round of Centralised Allotment Process (CAP Round-IV) (Admissions for the Academic Year 2006-2007 to the First Year of Four Year Full Time Degree Courses in Engineering / Technology)

In pursuance

Association of the Managements of Un-Aided Engineering Colleges

League: Magazine Shows
1730 PGA Tour Golf World Cup 04 (WGC) LIVE
2030 Sportscenter Sports-center Weekend
2035 Super Sunday LIVE
2130 English Premier F'ball League 04/05: Blackburn Rovers vs. Birmingham City LIVE
2335 Final Score LIVE

TEN SPORTS

0900 12th Women's Champions Trophy Fnl (1st & 2nd) Rosario, Argentina
1030 Trans World Sports
1130 Winning Post
1200 Legends
1300 Gillette World Sports



'Indiana Jones - The Temple of Doom' at 2000 Hrs. on ZMZ

1330 ICC Ckt. World
1400 12th Women's Champions Trophy Fnl (1st & 2nd) Rosario, Argentina
1530 World Strongman Cup '04 Germany
1600 Legends
1700 WWE: The Heat
1800 BILT Skins Invitational Golf
1900 12th Women's Champions Trophy Fnl (1st & 2nd) Rosario, Argentina
2030 Portugese League: FC Porto vs. Boavista
2300 WWE Heat

NEWS

DD NEWS

0830 The News
0930 Genext
1000 Sanskrit News
1005 The News
1100 Samachar
1200 News
1230 The News
1300 Haal Chaal Theek Thaak Hai
1400 Samachar
1430 The News
1500 Urdu Bulletin
1510 News For Hearing Impaired
1530 Family Time
1600 Samachar
1630 Kala Parikrama
1700 Ghoomta Aaina
1800 Samachar
1900 Metro News
1915 Khel Samachar
1930 The News
2000 News & Current Affair
2030 The News
2100 Samachar
2130 News & Current Affair
2300 Samachar

ZEE NEWS

0900 Kuch Kar Dikhana Hai
1030 Crime File



Evening with 'Men in Black' at 2100 on MAX

1100 Wheelocity
1230 Spl. Correspondent
1300 Surkhiyon Se Pare Ravivar
1400 Frame 3
1830 Bulletin
1900 Hindostan Hamara
2000 Raat 8 Baje
2030 Metro News
2100 Raat 9 Baje
2200 Din Bhar

STAR NEWS

0600 Star Savera
0930 Poll Kholi
1000 Khabar Din Bhar
1130 Red Alert
1430 Poll Kholi
1900 Khabar Din Bhar
1930 Wah Ckt.
2000 Khabar Din Bhar
2100 9pm Report
2200 Khabar Din Bhar

BBC WORLD

0830-2230 BBC News- Every Hour
0900 Life
1000 University Challenge
1200 Wheels
1300 Earth Report
1400 This Week (R)
1440 TBA
1740 Imagination
1900 Reporters
1935 Talking Point
2040 Dateline London
2200 IBR

CNN

0900 Next @ CNN
1030 World News
1100 World Report
1130 World News



'WWE: The Heat' at 1700 Hrs. on Ten Sports

1200 design 360
1300 Int'l Correspondent
1330 World News
1430 Larry King LIVE
1800 People in News
1830 World News
1900 Next@CNN
2000 Inside the Middle East
2030 World News
2100 World Sport
2130 Talk Asia
2230 Late Edition

CNBC TV18

0930 Good Life
1000 Classroom
1030 Auto Show
1100 Trendmill
1130 StoryBoard
1300 The Tonight Show with Jay Leno
1400 Executive Sports
1800 Taking Stock
1900 The Challenge
2000 Awaaz
2030 Storyboard
2130 Master Strokes
2200 Tonight at 10

CINEMA

ENGLISH

13 Going on 30 (U/A): Regal, 3.15, 5.30, 7.45, 10 p.m. Also at Inox, Starcity, Cineplanet, Imax, Gem, Glamour, Fame Adlabs, Fun Republic, Cinemagic, 24 Karat and Fame Malad.

Shark Tale (U): Sterling, 2, 4.30, 7, 9.30 p.m. Also at Inox, Cineplanet, Imax, Fame Adlabs, Fun Republic, Globus, Suburbia, Movietime, Fame Malad and R Adlabs.

Garfield - The Movie(U): Regal 1.30 p.m. Also at Inox, Starcity, Cineplanet, Suburbia, Gem, Glamour, Fame Adlabs, Cinemagic and Movietime.

Farhenheit 9/11 (A): Glamour, 2.30, 4.45 p.m. Also at Gem, 8 p.m.

The Terminal (U): New Empire, 1.30, 4, 6.30, 9.30 p.m.

HINDI

Mirchi (A): Super, 12, 3, 6, 9 p.m. Also at Capitol, Palace, Uday and Cineraj.

Aitraaz (U/A): Inox, Liberty, Maratha Mandir, 2.30, 6, 9.15 p.m. Also at Geeta, Plaza, Imax, Gossip, Galaxy, Premiere, Suncity, Pinky, Fame Adlabs, Moviestar, 24 Karat, Cinemax, New Era, Movietime, Diamond, Tilak, 3.30, 6.30, 9.30 p.m., Pooja (Dombivli), 12.30 p.m. and Meghdoot (Vashi).

Mughal-E-Azam (U): Inox, Eros, 2.45, 6, 9.15 p.m. Also at Minerva, 11.30 a.m., Cineplanet, Imax, Citylight, Gemini, Globus, Fame Adlabs, Fun Republic, 24 Karat, Fame Malad, Kalpana, Pooja (Dombivli), 3.30, 6.30, 9.30 and Tilak, 12.30 p.m., Meghraj (Vashi) and Haseen (Bhiwandi).



Monalisa and Rocky Sandhu in 'Tauba Tauba' at Central Plaza

Naach (U/A): Metro, 2.30, 5, 8, 10.30 p.m. Also at Minerva, Premiere, Sharda, Aurora, Cineplanet, Chandan, Suncity, Navrang, Kings and Meghraj (Vashi).

Veer-Zaara (U): New Excelsior, 2.45, 6, 9.45 p.m. Also at [illegible] Globus, [illegible] Movietime and 24 Karat, Kamran, [illegible] (Vashi) and Meghraj (Vashi).

Rakshak (U/A): Sharda, 3, 6, 9 p.m.

Vaastu Shastra (A): New Excelsior, 12 noon. Also at Central Plaza, 5.15, 10.15 p.m., Plaza, 12.15 p.m., Deepak, 6, 9 p.m., Paradise and Movietime.

Dhoom (U): Novelty, 11.30 a.m. Also at Cineplanet, Nandi, Gossip, Fame Adlabs, Cinemax, Movietime, 24 Karat, Fame Malad and Ganesh (Thane).

Tauba Tauba (A): Central Plaza, 2.45, 7.45 p.m.

MARATHI

Swaas (U): Deepak,12, 3 p.m. Also Citylight, 12.15 p.m., 24 Karat, Cinewonder, 10 a.m. and R Adlabs. (Tax Free)

Saat Chya Aat Gharat (U): Metro, 12 noon. Also at Cinemax, Cinestar and Cinewonder. (Tax free)

MORNING SHOWS

Bride and Prejudice (U): Fame Adlabs, 10.30 a.m. and Eros, 12.30 p.m.

Chadhti Jawani (A): Tilak, 10.30 a.m.

Hum Tum (U/A): Naaz, 11.30 a.m.

Murder (A): Premiere Gold, Premiere, 11.30 a.m.

Phir Milenge (U): Central Plaza 12 noon.

Kal Ho Naa Ho (U): Imperial, 11.30 a.m.

Dilwale Dulhaniye Le Jayenge (U): Maratha Mandir, 11.15 a.m. (Tax Free)

EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

Paradise Art Gallery: Exhibition of paintings by Ganesh Pyne, F.N. Souza, M. F. Husain, Raza and Paresh Maity. Lansdowne Road, Behind Regal Cinema, Opp. Apollo Hotel, Colaba, 10 am; **Golden Art Gallery:** Exhibition of paintings by Sonia Nahar, G-7, Multiplex, Gaiety-Galaxy Cinemas, Bandra, 11 am; **JAMAAT:** Paintings and sculptures by Rini Dhumal, 40, Shirin, near Colaba Post Office, 11 am; **Nehru Centre AC Gallery:** Exhibition of Paintings by Subuddah Ghosh and Jagannath Paul, Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai-18, 11 am; **Bajaj Art Gallery:** Joint Exhibition by Paintings by Neela Shete and Suresh Telore and Sculptures by Sunita Lamba, Bajaj Bhavan, Nariman Point, Mumbai-21, 11 am; **Nehru Centre Circular Gallery:** Exhibition of paintings by Ambaraya Chinmalli, Avinash Tumkur, Chandrashekhar Patil, Pramodkumar Nellogi and Ravikumar Sagarkar, Discovery of India, Dr Annie Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai-18, 11 am; **Jehangir Art Gallery:** Exhibition of recent painting 'Nature' by Ravindra Pawar, Gallery No.1-A/c, M.G. Road, Mumbai-23, 11 am; **Gallery Chemould:** Exhibition of paintings by Dhruvi Acharya, Jehangir Art Gallery, 10.30 am; **Art Musings:** Exhibition of solo show of Prench painter Maite Delteil featuring oil on canvas, No.1, Admiralty bldg, opp. Dunne's School, Colaba Cross Lane, 11 am; **Sakshi Gallery:** Sculptures and Paintings by Dhruva Mistry, Anjum Singh, Kishore Shinde, Amitava Das, Prabhakar Kolte, Subodh Gupta, Synergy Art Foundation Ltd., 39A1, Sri Ram Mills Compound, Lower Parel, Mumbai-13, 11 am; **Kamal Nayan Bajaj Art Gallery:** An Exhibition of Paintings by Ashok Kumar Dey, Rajib Deyashi, Pinaki Acharyya and Anindya Jashu, Bajaj Bhavan, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400 021, 11 am to 7 pm

MISCELLANEOUS

Yoga Sadhana Kendra: Yoga sadhana classes (Asana, Pranayam, Shudhikriya, Meditation etc.), Patidar Wadi, Near Hotel Airways, L.B.S. Road, Ghatkopar (W), Mumbai-86, Morning 6.00 to 7.00; **Mandvi Co-operative Bank Ltd.:** Debut exhibition of paintings by Ms. Ruchi S. Shah, Mandvi Bank Art Gallery, Gaurav Plaza, RRT Road, Mulund (W), Mumbai-400 080, 1 pm to 7 pm.

98.3 FM

RADIO MIRCHI

0600 Back 2 Back
0800 Mirchi Mornings
1000 Mumbai Demand
1200 Sun Taaron Ki Dhun - instant Astro Show
1400My 98.3
1500 Back to Back
1800Indipop 10
1900 Mirchi Top 20
2300Chaska Mix
0100 Back 2 Back

WEATHER

Day temperatures were appreciably to markedly above normal in Saurashtra and Kutch, Konkan and Goa.

Indian Cities	Max	Min
New Delhi	29	11
Mumbai	33	25
Chennai	28	22
Kolkata	30	18
Bangalore	24	18
Ahmedabad	32	18
Thiruvanthapuram	32	23
Pune	30	12

TIDE

High tide 07 h. 36 m. 3.87 m. 20 h. 51 m. 3.51 m.
Low Tide 01 h. 10 m.1.69 m. 14 h. 28 m 1.29 m.

PHASES OF THE MOON

Full Moon:
November 27, 2004, 01:37 a.m.

ALMANAC

21-11-2004 (SUNDAY)

Vrischika Masa 05 - Sri Tarana Samvatsara- Dakshinayana- Sharat Ritu - Kartika Sukla - Dasami Hr. 21-05, PurvaBhadra Nakshatra Hr. 16-41, Harshana Yoga Hr. 12-54, Shawwal 7.

Rahu Kalam 04.30 to 06.00 p.m.

Kali Day 1864865

Sun enters Tropical Sagittarius Hr. 28-52.

— Daivajna K.N. Somayaji

FLIGHTS OUT OF MUMBAI

NATIONAL

NEW DELHI
Indian Airlines 0600,0700, 0800, 0900, 1000, 1200, 1300, 1700, 1800, 1900 , 2045 hrs (daily)
Jet Airways 0700, 0805,0925,1100, 1315 (only Wed.), 1345 (except Wed.), 1510 (except Satur.), 1700, 1750, 2000, 2230 hrs
Air Sahara 0650, 0935, 1300, 1520, 1745, 2035 hrs
Air Deccan 1600 hrs (daily)

KOLKATA
Indian Airlines 0630 and 1730 hrs daily
Jet Airways 0650, 0755, 1635, 1925 hrs
Air Sahara 0730, 1030, 1915 hrs

CHENNAI
Indian Airlines 0705, 0920, 1800 and 2030 hrs (daily).
Jet Airways 0635, 0900, 1000, 1445, 1720, 1920 hrs
Air Sahara 0720, 1845 hrs

BANGALORE
Indian Airlines 0615, 0930, 1055, 1730 and 2030 hrs (daily)
Jet Airways 0300, 0640, 0920 (except Sun.), 1015, 1545, 1740, 2010 hrs (except Sun.)
Air Sahara 0620, 1245, 1820 hrs
Air Deccan 1130 hrs (daily)

GOA
Indian Airlines: 0550, 1240 and 1440 hrs (daily); 1600 hrs. (Mon., Wed. and Fri.)
Jet Airways 0630 (except Sun.), 1200, 1230, 1415 (except Wed.), 1445 hrs (only Wed.)
Air Sahara 1250 (daily)
Air Deccan 0520, 1435 hrs (daily)

Phones: Indian Airlines: 26168000 & 22023131; **Jet Airways:** 56966111; **Air Sahara:** 30302020; **Air Deccan:** 9892577008

INTERNATIONAL

AMSTERDAM
KLM/Northwest Airlines 0040 hrs (daily)

FRANKFURT
Lufthansa 0325 hrs
Air India 0240 hrs. (Tues., Fri., Sun.); 0745 hrs. (Mon., Thur., Sat.)

LONDON
British Airways 0215 hrs
Air India 0315 hrs (Mon., Tue.,Wed., Fri., Sun.); 0710 hrs (Thur., Sat.)

NEW YORK
Delta Airlines (Via Paris) 0150 hrs
Air India 0315 hrs. (Mon., Tue.,Wed., Fri., Sun.); 0710 hrs (Thur., Sat.); 0745 hrs (daily)

DUBAI
Emirates 0415; 1900 hrs
Air India 0245 hrs. (Mon., Thurs., Sat); 0805 hrs. (Tues.); 0400 and 1640 hrs. (Wed.); 1710 hrs. (Fri.); 1745 hrs. (daily).

TOKYO (Via Bangkok)
Air India 1520 hrs. (Tues., Fri.); 1830 hrs. (Wed., Sat)

TEL AVIV
El Al Israel 23.00 hrs (Mon. and Thu.)

Phones:
Air India: 22796666; **British Airways**: 98925 77470; **Lufthansa**: 56301933; **Singapore Airlines**: 22022747; **Emirates**: 28797979; **Delta**: 28267000, 28349890; **All Nippon Airways**: 22846352; **El Al Israel**: 22154701.

TRAIN RESERVATIONS

Earliest date on which berth / seats were available at 15:39 hrs. on 20/11/2004 in important trains leaving CST, Mumbai Central, Dadar and Lokmanya Tilak Terminus

Train No.	Train /Exp / Mail	Dep	1 AC	AC 2T	1ST	AC 3T	AC CH	SL
NORTH								
◆2951	Mumbai Rajdhani	16.55	12/11	22/11		23/11		
◆2953	Aug. Kranti Raj	17.40	12/11	22/11		23/11		
2925	Paschim	11.35	17/11	30/11		07/12		17/12
◆2903	Golden Temple Mail	21.25	29/11	29/11		03/12		07/12
❖2137	Punjab Mail	19.10	25/11	13/12		05/12		08/12
❖2133	Pushpak Exp.	08.20	12/12	14/01		13/01		09/12
◆2471	Swaraj Exp.	06.45		N.A.		N.A.		21/11
EAST								
❖2859	Gitanjali Exp.	06.00		07/12		08/12		07/12
❖1019	Konark Exp.	15.10		28/12		13/12		29/11
❒6029	Howrah Exp. (Nag.)	21.50		27/11				30/11
❖1093	Mahanagri Exp.	00.10		02/12		06/12		07/12
❖2105	Vidarbha Exp.	19.40	22/11	29/11		11/12		30/11
2809	Howrah Mail (Nag)	20.40	21/11	14/01		14/12		11/12
●5645	Dadar-Guwahati Exp.	07.55		15/01		19/01		N.A.
●1439	Sevagram Exp.	15.10		07/12		30/11		30/11
❒3202	Kurla-Patna Exp.	21.45		21/11		21/11		23/11
❒2101	Jnaneswari Delx	20.35	29/11	29/11		23/11		06/12
❒1015	Kushinagar Exp.	22.55		07/12		09/12		08/12
WEST								
◆2009	Ahmedabad Shatabdi	06.25	09/11				13/11	
◆2927	Vadodara Exp.	23.35	07/11	12/11		12/11		29/11
✲4708	Ranakpur Express	15.00		29/11		28/11		28/11
❖6331	Trivandram Exp.	12.10		22/11				22/11
◆2955	BCT-Jaipur Exp.	18.50	19/11	28/11		27/11		08/12
◆2933	Karnavati Exp.	13.40					12/11	
◆9007	Aravali Express	21.00	27/11	28/11				29/11
◆2901	Gujarat Mail	21.50	12/11	12/11		12/11		19/12
◆9005	Saurashtra Mail	20.25	N.A.	12/11	N.A.	12/11		28/11
SOUTH								
❖6529	Udyan Exp.	08.00		14/12		05/01		07/12
●1063	Chennai Exp.	20.30	21/11	27/12		06/01		02/12
❒1013	Coimbatore Exp.	22.35		09/12		30/11		23/11
❖1081	Kanyakumari Exp.	15.45		27/12		08/12		22/11
❖6009	CST-Chennai Mail	23.35		29/11		05/12		22/11
❒6345	Netravati Exp.	11.40		12/01		05/01		09/12

❖Trains Ex CST; ◆Ex Mumbai Central Trains; ●Ex Dadar; ❒Ex-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus; ✲Ex Bandra Terminus. It does not necessarily mean that reservation is available on all subsequent dates. **Enquiry Telephone Nos.:** Arrival/Departure: 132; PNR and accommodation availability: 137. **Premium Services:** 1900 22 66 66 (accommodation availability, arrival/departure) and also call back facility. For Online Booking of Tickets: **www.irctc.co.in.** **Tatkal service available on these trains.**

troop r… …ever
… Indo-Pak border and second from Jammu and Kashmir," defence sources said.

Mittal celebrations on: Almost six months after the lavish wedding of his daughter Vanisha in Paris, costing about 30 million pounds, NRI steel tycoon L N Mittal plans to celebrate the marriage in Kolkata. It will be followed by a third celebration in Delhi.

17 policemen killed in ambush: Suspected Naxalites on Saturday ambushed a police party, killing 17 constables and wounding several others in Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh. The Naxalites blew up a culvert as a truck carrying an unspecified number of police personnel crossed it. So far, no Naxalite outfit has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Gold shoots to all-time high: Gold prices on Saturday shot up by Rs 40 per ten grammes to scale an all-time closing peak of Rs 6,650 for the standard variety (99.5 purity) following renewed stockists buying in line with a fresh rise in global markets amidst renewed dollar weakness. The pure gold (99.9 purity) also shot up by a similar margin to close at Rs 6,690 from Rs 6,650 on Friday.

Forex reserves cross $123b: India's foreign exchange reserves rose further by $1.31 billion to cross $123 billion during the week ended on November 12 due to huge overseas investment in stock market and trade inflows. The foreign currency assets were also up by $1,312 million to $117,845 million, the RBI said on Saturday.

New US bill to protect reporters: Reporters will not be forced to reveal their sources, and their notes, photographs and other material will be protected from the government eyes under a bill introduced in the US Senate. Democrat Senator Christopher J Dodd proposed the legislation on Friday.

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International Appointments, now on Wednesday.

than last year when the questionnaire leak had left the country stunned. This is just one of the security measures the IIMs have taken this year.

A little over 1.5 lakh students are expected to take the test in 24 cities. IIM sources said trunks carrying question papers had already reached the cities that would conduct the tests. The six IIMs—Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta, Lucknow, Indore and Kozhikode—account for about 1,200 seats.

"A number of additional features were incorporated in the process of conducting the retest in February. These have been regularised now. While an extra seal has been added to individual papers, to be broken by the examinee, locking and sealing of trunks carrying question papers have also been strengthened," said IIM-A director Bakul Dholakia.

basis point rise in retail prime lending rate (RPLR)—the rate to which all floating rate loans are linked to.

The interest on fixed rate housing loans will remain unchanged at the current rate, which is between 8.25% and 8.75%, HDFC said. The firm had raised interest on fixed rate home loans in July and October. The State Bank of India (SBI) had also hiked its home loan rates in October.



HDFC resets the rate of interest for all its floating rate customers every three months and the hike in the RPLR will impact the existing customers based on the date of their disbursement. "The change in the RPLR will result in a revision in the repayment term for the existing customers while their equated month-

had hiked its rates as well as 25-75 basis poi announced an home loan rat LIC Housing F other banks ha low suit.

In the last fe of inflation ha to nearly 8% r ability of mor market has shrunk. Sin yields on government b also moved up by 200 b 7.1% per annum, and the managed companies in borrow from institutiona creased since April.

US gets $13b from foreign students

While Indian Software Exports Fetch $12.5 Billion Annually

TIMES INSIGHT GROUP

New Delhi: International students in the US are contributing in no small measure to its economy. According to the Open Doors survey for 2003-'04 by the US Institute of International Education, international students brought in a staggering $13 billion to the US economy that year through their spending on tuition, living expenses and other related costs. To put this figure in perspective, India's total software exports for the year 2003-'04 were $12.5 billion. No wonder the US Department of Commerce describes higher education as the country's 5th largest service sector export.



Neelabh

The report says that 67.3% of all international students rely on personal and family sources to fund their education. If one includes other sources outside the US (assistance from home govt or university), the share rises to 75%. While the share of personal and family sources of funding has more or less remained the same, there have been very significant changes in the pattern of funding, particularly those coming from within the US. The US government funded 10,111 international students in 2003-'04 as opposed to just 3,085 in 2002-'03, a phenomenal increase of 228%. On the other hand, students funded by private US sponsorships fell from 14,366 to a modest 2,921 in 2003-'04, a decline of close to 80%. If we

▶ Indians studying in UK on the rise, P 7

compare funding of education by academic levels, the difference is clearly visible. While 81.8% of international students at the undergraduate level rely on personal funds, only 10.8% are funded by their university. However, at the graduate level, US university sponsorships take care of 40.4% of the international students, compared to 51.6% who rely on their own funds. This seems to make a difference for Indian and Chinese students. While students from these countries comprise a mere 8.4% of the international undergraduate students, their share at the graduate level is an impressive 40.7%.

Indian drives new search engine

By Chidanand Rajghatta/TNN

Seattle: In one of the brief bios of Anurag Acharya that can be dredged up on the internet, courtesy Google, there is the following entry. "Acharya is a principal engineer at Google. In previous lives, he has been an undergrad at IIT Kharagpur, a graduate student at Carnegie Mellon, a postdoc at the University of Maryland and an assistant professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He came to Google for a visit couple of years ago. He found the natives friendly and fascinating, so he stayed."



Anurag Acharya

This week, Acharya is the toast of the world's academic community for launching from his friendly and fascinating home a new search service aimed at scientists and researchers. Google Scholar, a beta version of which went on stream mid-week, will enable them to look for scholastic literature like peer-reviewed papers, books, abstracts and technical reports. The new tool is already receiving rave reviews on sites such as geek.com for adding a new dimension to internet searches.

For now, the Google Scholar is free. "We, at Google, have benefited much from academic research," says Acharya, whose last name fittingly means a spiritual teacher or scholar. "This is one of the ways in which we are giving back to the research community." The Scholar project, Acharya explained, was the result of problems he confronted as a young student at IIT Kharagpur (which he describes as a sleepy little rural backwater town) when he found material in his library typically out of date. Google Scholar will make the world's scientific literature universally accessible in a contemporary manner.

"We don't know where the next breakthrough will come from. We want everyone to be able to stand on the shoulders of giants," Acharya said in a blog entry on Google, referring to the Isaac Newton quote: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

In random thoughts that litter the internet over the past decade, Acharya reveals himself to be an animal lover and a history buff. In one diary entry in 1993, he writes, "Another week has leaked away. One less week in my life. I wonder what I have to show for it. I wonder if it is possible to count these things." A decade later he has something to show and it can be counted.

21-11-04

Cloned cow gives birth

Beijing: China's first cloned cow has given birth to an artificially inseminated calf as part of a programme to breed genetically manipulated animals, state press reported on Thursday.

The calf was born on Wednesday at a farm in eastern Shandong province belonging to the Kelong Animal Husbandary Industrial Co., Xinhua news agency said. The calf's mother "Wei Wa" is China's first cloned cow and was born on the same farm in October 2002 in a programme that is jointly operated with the China Agricultural University. AFP

25 rebels killed in Mosul

Mosul (Iraq): A frontal assault on US troops by dozens of Iraqi insurgents in Mosul left an American soldier and about 25 guerrillas dead in one of the boldest attacks yet on occupying forces in Iraq.

Battle raged late on Wednesday as President Bush said his forces would do all they could to make it possible to hold next month's election in Mosul and other violent cities. But many residents of Mosul say they are too afraid to vote. The soldier died of wounds, the military said on Thursday. He had been on a patrol that was hit by a suicide car bomb close to a US outpost. Gunmen tried to overrun the area, sending in another suicide truck bomber and firing mortars and rockets in an apparent bid to wipe out an entire US unit.



REMAINS OF THE DAY: Iraqis clear debris in the damaged telecom centre of Abi Tammam after the US air raid in Mosul

About 15 US troops were wounded before jets screamed in low over the rooftops to bomb the attackers and force them to break off, leaving about 25 insurgents dead, a US military spokesman said. The attack was one of the stiffest US forces have faced since the guerrilla war began last year.

Minority Sunni Arabs fear voting will mean domination by the long-oppressed Shiite majority. Sunni leaders say violence in the Sunni dominated areas mean the vote will be unfair and leave them under-represented. Reuters

Japan princess' engagement announced

Tokyo: Princess Sayako's engagement to a Tokyo city bureaucrat, a commoner, on Thursday became official with an announcement by Japan's imperial household agency.



Sayako, 35, is the only daughter of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and Yoshiki Kuroda, 39, is a commoner working at city hall in the urban development section.

"Kuroda is a fine and appropriate person," Toshio Yuasa, grand steward of the imperial household, told reporters. The wedding will probably occur in the latter half of next year, she said.

The announcement was postponed after the December 18 death of Sayako's great aunt. That followed an earlier delay in November out of consideration for victims of an earthquake in northern Japan in October.

Sayako is an ornithologist and researcher. She will become a commoner, move out of the palace and lose her royal title, after she marries the low-keyed be-spectacled Kuroda, a friend of her brother's. AP

Alaska oil spill hits fisheries

By Eli Sanders

The local crab-fishing season has been cancelled and the estimated number of animals killed or injured by oil has sharply increased as a rare break in rough Bering Sea weather allows officials to gain a better sense of the damage from a large spill in the Aleutian Islands.

More than 355,000 gallons of fuel oil are now thought to have spilled from the freighter Selendang Ayu, which ran aground and split in two just off Unalaska Island on December 8.

The island is home to the nation's largest commercial fishing port by volume, and the second-largest by value of annual catch, said Frank Kelty, resource analyst and former mayor of the city of Unalaska, which sits along the port, Dutch Harbour.

Unalaska's big commercial operations, which fish at some distance from the port, should be relatively unaffected by the cancellation of the local tanner crab season, which was to have begun on January 15. But small-boat fishermen will be badly hurt, Kelty said, losing nearly $500,000 in revenue to the oil contamination that has deprived them of the area's biggest catch at this time of the year.



Though the bow half of the Selendang Ayu has sunk, the stern half remains afloat and holds about 120,000 gallons of fuel and diesel oil

The 738-foot Selendang Ayu was headed from Seattle to China carrying soybeans and about 480,000 gallons of fuel when its engines failed and fierce winds thwarted efforts by a rescue tug to keep it from running aground. Most members of the crew were saved, but six of them were killed when a Coast Guard rescue helicopter crashed into the sea. The bow half of the ship has since been tilted precipitously and almost fully submerged by gale-force winds.

Roughly 120,000 gallons of fuel and diesel oil remain in the vessel's stern half, which is still upright, and salvage crews hoped to take advantage of the relatively calm weather - which in the Bering Sea in late December means swells close to 10 feet and winds slightly less than gale force -to begin pumping that fuel out before it can spill.

Biologists have so far counted 109 bird carcasses and more than 600 birds coated with oil in the area around the wreck. But they expect that many more birds, perhaps thousands, have been killed. NYT News Service

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Issued by : Director Rural Development and Panchayats, Punjab

EDIT PAGE

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

We're a very generous kind-hearted nation, and what you're beginning to see is a typical response for America.

— George W Bush

Not Charity

Aid benefits donor as well as recipient

Aid is not charity. This is the basic point that the West, particularly the US, must realise. The Bush administration has 'doubled' its aid commitment to the tsunami-affected to $35 million, after its earlier pledge of $15 million provoked the UN Relief Coordinator to dub it as 'stingy'. The US can keep these crumbs if it feels so pained to part with funds in the face of what the UN terms the worst-ever disaster in terms of the scale of relief required. It should also realise that its parsimonious instincts do not serve its own interests. In a globally integrated world, a catastrophe in Phuket could affect Texas, where George W Bush prefers to locate himself at this time of the year. With Thailand off the tourist map, US business interests such as travel agencies, hotels and airlines would also be hit. For too long has the US looked at aid as a lever to further its political and economic interests, particularly in West Asia. But that paradigm, apart from being cynical, is also outmoded in today's context. Since the late eighties, there has been a marked shift in FDI flows from Europe to Asia. The affected countries are not just anthropological curiosities, but markets on the edge of prosperity. Aid to such societies to develop their infrastructure and achieve a greater measure of social and economic equity will not only help them but also the donors. The developed countries, having reached consumption saturation point, must in order to maintain their prosperity look for new markets in the developing world. Far from realising this, the First World, and the US in particular, has been less than generous in terms of economic assistance.

The UN cries itself hoarse over stagnant levels of aid to little effect. Only four of the 22 industrial nations — Norway, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands — meet the UN norm of putting aside at least 0.7% of their gross national product for aid. These countries cough up about $55 billion each year or 0.4% of their GNP on an average. The US is the largest donor in absolute terms, but by contributing about 0.2% of its national income, or $15 billion, ranks last in this respect. The aid kitty rose to $68 billion in 2003, largely on account of US assistance to Iraq, where it has spent close to $200 billion since the war. The tsunami should provoke the US and others to redefine the concept of aid and its recipients. Aid is trade, nothing more or less: Accept the give-and-take and cut out the hypocrisy.

Major Sunni party pulls out of Iraqi elections

Any delay now will derail democracy

The Sunni-dominated Iraq Islamic Party's (IIP) decision to stay out of the electoral process in January is regrettable. But the show must go on. After years of enjoying disproportionate privileges, the Sunni minority is clearly worried that the polls

No Child's Play

Malnutrition Needs Tackling in its Infancy

By Arun Gupta

Eight of the world's distinguished economists, three of them Nobel laureates, gathered in Copenhagen six months ago to address a question: What issues would one prioritise to advance the welfare of developing countries, if one were to assume that an additional $50 billion is at the disposal of their governments? They examined 30 proposals, accepted 17, ranked them in descending order of desirability and the 'Copenhagen Consensus 2004' emerged. HIV/AIDS received first priority and policies to attack hunger and malnutrition followed close behind. Additional spending on infant and child nutrition was one of these proposals. How do we deal with the huge problem of child health and nutrition in India?

India's response to the issue takes the form of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme. Over the years, child malnutrition, which contributes to more than 60% of the 2.4 million under-five child deaths annually, has been treated from the standpoint of treatment rather than prevention. Early solutions are needed, as malnutrition sets in during first two years and is virtually irreversible after that. According to the WHO and the Tenth Five-year Plan, child malnutrition is related to inappropriate infant feeding practices. However, efforts to deal with it only focus on supplementary food, which goes more often to older children. Data on the effect of food supply on child undernutrition, or the health and nutritional status of other family members, is non-existent.



Several studies have reported that infant feeding practices are very poor in India. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months is practised in about 40% of the infants and appropriate complementary feeding after six months in about 33%. It is not always understood that at this age children are dependant on care-givers, whose knowledge about infant and young child nutrition is poor. Adults succumb to commercial pressures, buying baby foods which only perpetuate poverty. Optimal feeding norms do not set in with food or money distribution, as the government might like to believe.

Some months ago, reports of malnutrition deaths from Maharashtra caught the attention of the media, even as more than 6,500 children under the age of five die in India everyday. Two-thirds of these deaths occur during the first year. Have we ever looked at the survivors numbering about 75 million below the age of three, of whom 36 million are underweight and destined not to reach their full development potential? We need to invest in their quality of life before their condition becomes irreversible.

Sadly, our policy-makers, planners, and programme managers seek solutions where none exist. It is "hunger" which gets treated with supplementary nutrition. The ICDS does not focus on preventing hunger. As the development of the brain occurs almost entirely in the first three years, it is intervention at this age rather than younger children as a whole that is crucial. Ensuring optimal infant and young child feeding is the best way out; it provides food, health and care all at once. The ICDS reaches only a quarter of the child population, and current plans to universalise it are underway.

It would be disastrous if we cannot ensure quality of service delivery to prevent child malnutrition and reduce mortality. The bundle of services that the ICDS provides includes growth monitoring of children and education of families. But in actual fact this hardly happens. The anganwadi worker, the person who bears ICDS on her shoulders, has hardly any skills and sufficient knowledge to do so. Preoccupied with so many other tasks, we cannot expect wonders from her. The key to quality is to build capacity for delivery of family-based interventions with community involvement.

The Pradhan Mantri Gramodyog Yojna is meant to focus on nutrition of the under-three, but 'food' supplementation remains its mainstay. The reproductive and child health programme managed by the Centre suffers from similar problems. Child care and nutrition, the critical elements, are missing from these programmes. Preventing malnutrition with focus on under-three cannot be expected from unsupportive healthcare systems and inadequately skilled workers.

Programmes dealing with child health and development lack coordination, have a fragmented approach and are grossly under-budgeted. The child under the age six gets eight times less than the child over six, which makes it practically impossible to achieve the desired outcomes on child survival and development. The child under three does not get her due share from these resources.

The solution lies in improving infant and young child feeding practices through countrywide breastfeeding support centres in all public and private sector facilities, managed by a skilled counsellor. The budget for under-six children should substantially increase from the present level of Rs 3,000 crore. The share of the under-three facing sheer neglect needs to be defined. Instead of investment commissions to promote foreign inflows, we should be looking at investing in the child. Spending to prepare children for a better life is an imperative for a healthy economy and society. Interventions for the development of infants and young children — those who will vote, work, lead and sustain the country — are urgently needed, and they come at a price.

ಶ್ರೀ/ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ವಿಲೀವ ತಿರಂಗ ಶೆಲುವಾಂತ-

ಮನೆ ನಂ 56 ವಾರ್ಡ್ ನಂ 6

ಓಣಿ ವಿದ್ಯಾದ್ರಿ ಶಾಲೆಯ

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ಚೆಕ್‌ರು ಬಂದಲಾವಣೆ ಮಾಡುವೆ ಕುರಿತು.

ವಿಷಯ : ಈಗ ವಿತರಣೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹೊಸ ಪಡಿತರ ಚೀಟಿ ನಮಗೆ ಬಂದಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಸ್ವಾನಿಕ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಹೊಸ ಪಡಿತರ ಚೀಟಿ ನೀಡುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ.

ಮಾನ್ಯರೇ,

ನಾನು/ನಾವು ಶ್ರೀ/ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ವಿಲೀವ ತಿರಂಗ ಶೆಲುವಾಂತ- ಇದ್ದು ನಾವು ವಾಸಿಸುವ ಮನೆ ನಂ 56 ಹಾಗೂ ವಾರ್ಡ ನಂ 6 ಇದ್ದು ಸದರ ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ತುಂಬಾ ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ವಾಸಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಈಗ ವಿತರಿಸುವ ಹೊಸ ಪಡಿತರ ಚೀಟಿಯನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮ ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದ ಕಾರಣ ಮಾ॥ ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಆಹಾರ ಮತ್ತು ನಾಗರಿಕ ಪೂರೈಕೆ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ರವರು ಯೋಗ್ಯ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ಮಾಡಿ ನಮಗೆ ಹಳದಿ /ಅಂತ್ಯೋದಯ /ಎ.ಪಿ.ಎಲ್ ಪಡಿತರ ಚೀಟಿಯನ್ನು ಕೊಡಬೇಕೆಂದು ತಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೆದುಕೊಡುವ ವಿನಂತಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಹಾಗೂ ನಮ್ಮ ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಸಿಸುವ ಸದಸ್ಯರ ಹೆಸರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿದೆ.

ಅನಂ	ಹೆಸರು	ಸಂಬಂಧ	ವಯಸ್ಸು	ಉದ್ಯೋಗ
1	ವಿಲೀವ ತಿರಂಗ ಶೆಲುವಾಂತ-	ಪತ್ನಿ	59	ಸೇವೆ
2	ಮೀಲಮಾ ವಿಲೀವ ಶೆಲುವಾಂತ-	ಸೊಡಲು	55	ಸೇವೆ
3	ಮಾಡಕ್ಷಿಗಿರಿ " "	ಮಗ	30	ಸೇವೆ
4	ಶಿವಾಜಿ ಮಾಡಕ್ಷಿ "	ಸೊಸೆ	26	ಸೇವೆ
5	ಗರುಂಶಿಲ್ " "	ಮೊಮ್ಮಗಳು	3	—

ಆನೇಲ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆಯೇ? ಹೌದು ✓ ಇಲ್ಲ

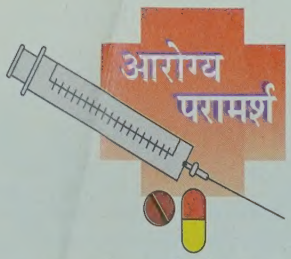
ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಆದಾಯ : 3,00,000

ಅಕ್ಷರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ರೂ : ಮೂರು ಲಕ್ಷ ಮಾತ್ರ

ಸ್ಥಳ : ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ
ದಿನಾಂಕ : 9-11-2006

ಸಹಿ

ಈ ಚಿಲ್ಲರ ಹುಡುಗೆಗೊಬ್ರಿಯಲಿಗಾ ಶಿಲುವಾರ ಬುರಿಗಾ ಬಂತಾ
(2) ಹಳಬು ವಿಡಿತರ ಚೀಟಿಯಾ ಕೈಡಿಯಾ ತ್ರಿಳ ಬುತ್ತು
(3) ಅಲ್ಲಾಹುಣಾಕ ವಿಡಿತರ ಕೀಟಿಯಾ ಕೈಳ ಲಗಳ್ಳಾನಿದ್ದ



प्रश्न : मी ३९ वर्षीय विवाहित स्त्री आहे. माझे पती आणि मी आपापल्या नोकरीच्या बंधनामुळे वेगवेगळ्या शहरांत राहतो. त्यांचं महिन्या दोन महिन्यांनी येणं होतं.

या दरम्यान अशी एक अघटित गोष्ट घडली की, त्याची मी कल्पनाच करू शकत नव्हते. यांच्या अनुपस्थितीत यांचे एक मित्र आमच्या घरी आले आणि त्यांनी माझ्यावर बळजबरी केली. तेव्हापासून मी दुःखी आहे.

मनात दोन शंका वारंवार येत राहतात. पहिली अशी की, या दुर्घटनेमुळे मला एड्स तर झाला नसेल आणि दुसरी ही की याबद्दल मी आपल्या पतीला सर्वकाही सांगायला हवं का?

कदाचित यांना सांगितल्यावर आमचा सुखी संसार उद्ध्वस्त होईल की काय, याची भीती वाटते. तशी मी शारीरिकदृष्ट्या निरोगी आहे आणि ही घटना घडून आता जवळपास एका वर्षापेक्षा अधिक कालावधी उलटला आहे.

उत्तर : लैंगिक बळजबरीच्या एका दुर्घटनेमुळे एच. आय.व्ही. संसर्ग होण्याची शक्यता खूपच कमी आहे. तरीही शंका दूर करण्यासाठी तुमच्याकडे एकच योग्य उपाय आहे की, एखाद्या मोठ्या सरकारी इस्पितळात किंवा खाजगी क्लिनिकल पॅथॉलॉजीमध्ये जा आणि एच.आय.व्ही.साठी आपल्या रक्ताची तपासणी करा. ही तपासणी पूर्ण गोपनीयतीने करण्यात येते. आणि याचा रिपोर्ट तुम्हाला त्या किंवा दुसऱ्या दिवशी मिळू शकतो.

त्याचबरोबर तुम्हाला आपल्या संरक्षणासाठी योग्य पावलं उचलावी लागतील, म्हणजे पुन्हा अशी कोणतीही दुर्घटना तुमच्या बाबतीत घडणार नाही. पती आणि मुलांच्या अनुपस्थितीत कुणी परका पुरुष घरी आला तर त्याचं आदरातिथ्य करण्याऐवजी त्याला बाहेरून निरोप देणं योग्य ठरेल. राहिला प्रश्न या गोष्टी सांगण्याचा. तर ही दुर्घटना घडून इतका काळ उलटला आहे की, ते वाईट स्वप्न समजून विसरण्यातच सर्वांचं हित आहे.

●

प्रश्न : माझ्या मुलीचं वय ११ वर्षं ६ महिने आहे आणि तिची उंची ४ फूट ८ इंच आहे. चार महिन्यांपूर्वी तिची मासिकपाळीही सुरू झाली आहे.

आता यापुढे तिची उंची वाढेल, की ती आपल्या आजीप्रमाणेच बुटकी राहील? माझ्या मुलीची उंची वाढण्यासाठी एखादा सोपा उपाय सांगा. एखाद्या औषधाने उंची वाढू शकेल का?

उत्तर : सामुदायिक स्तरावर भारतीय मुला-मुलींच्या केलेल्या अध्ययनावरून कळतं की, सामान्यपणे १२ ते १४ वर्षांच्या दरम्यान भारतीय किशोरींची उंची झपाट्याने वाढते. त्यानंतर ही गती कमी होते. पण उंची वाढण्याचा क्रम १६-१७ वर्षांपर्यंत राहतो. म्हणूनच अजून तुमच्या मुलीची उंची वाढण्याची बरीच शक्यता आहे.

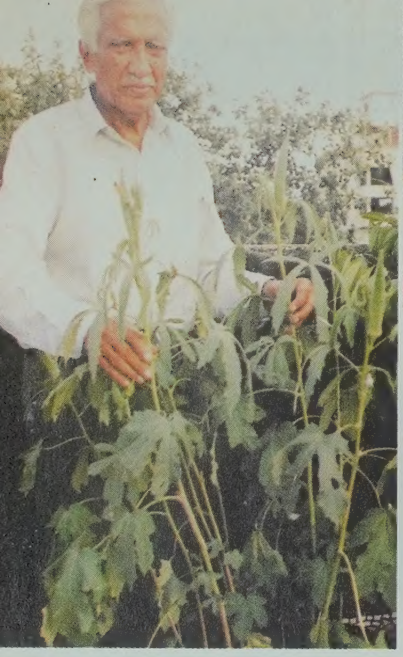
तिला संतुलित म्हणजे प्रथिनं, व्हिटॅमिन आणि अन्य अनिवार्य पोषक तत्त्वयुक्त आहार द्या. रोज व्यायाम करायला लावा. व्यायाम कोणताही असो उदा. जॉगिंग, धावणं, पोहणं इत्यादी. त्यासाठी क्रॉसबारला लटकायला हवंच असं नाही.

रोज रात्री ७-८ तास गाढ झोपायला लावा. परीक्षणांती या तथ्याला पुष्टी मिळाली आहे की, पुरेशी झोप घेतल्यामुळेही शरीरात उंची वाढणारे म्हणजे ग्रोथ हार्मोन्सचा स्राव होतो.

या उपायांनी तुमच्या मुलीची उंची तिच्या जेनेटिक गुणांनुसार वाढत राहील. अनेक मासिकांत काही आयुर्वेदिक औषध निर्माते जरी उंची वाढविणाऱ्या कॅप्सूलच्या जाहिराती अवश्य छापत असले तरी अजूनही या कॅप्सूलचा वैज्ञानिकदृष्ट्या काही उपयोग सिद्ध झालेला नाही. महागडं टॉनिक आणि हेल्थ फूड घेण्यातही काही अर्थ नाही.

काही धूर्त चिकित्सक अति उत्सुक किशोरांना उंच होण्यासाठी ग्रोथ हार्मोनचं इंजेक्शन घ्यायला सांगतात. पण हे इंजेक्शन उपयोगी नसतं. यामुळे शरीरातील सर्व हार्मोनप्रणाली आणि मेटाबोलिझम असंतुलित होतो. ●







गच्चीवर बहरली बाग मातीविना

दादर पूर्वेला 'प्रभात व्ह्यू' इमारतीच्या सिमेंट कॉन्क्रिटच्या गच्चीवर विविध प्रकारच्या वृक्षवेलींची बाग असून त्या बागेत कुठेही माती आढळणार नाही. शिवाय तिच्या देखरेखीसाठी पूर्णवेळ माळीदेखील नसून भरपूर पाण्याची गरजही या बागेला भासत नाही. एवढंच नव्हे, तर कुठलंही रासायनिक खत किंवा रासायनिक किटकनाशक येथील फुलझाडांसाठी वापरलं जात नाही. या बागेत रताळी, तोंडली, अननस, कांचन, गुलबक्षी, तुळस, घेवडा, गुलाब, कोहळा, कडिपत्ता, लिंबू, पांढरी-भगवी लीली, भेंडी, भोपळा, डाळींब, सुरण, झेंडू आदी नानाविध वनस्पती आढळतील.

या सर्वांचा कर्ताकरविता कोण म्हणाल तर पंचाहत्तर वर्षांचा एक तरुण, ज्यांचं नाव आहे, यशवंत विष्णू दामले. होय, एकेकाळी मराठी चित्रपट निर्मितीत आघाडीवर असलेल्या 'प्रभात' कंपनीचे भागीदार विष्णू दामले यांचे चिरंजीव. मुंबई महापालिकेतून इंजिनियर म्हणून सेवानिवृत्त झाल्यानंतर वेळेच्या सदुपयोगाबरोबरच आपला छंद जोपासण्यासाठी त्यांनी एका अभिनव कल्पनेला मूर्त रूपात साकार केलं. मराठी विज्ञान परिषदेच्या शहरी शेती या विषयावरील विभागातर्फे त्यांना प्रेरणा मिळाल्यानंतर १९९२पासून त्यांनी या उपक्रमाला सुरुवात केली व त्या कामात पत्नी वीणा दामले यांचीही त्यांना मदत लाभली. भाजीच्या काड्या, कोबीची पाने, फळांच्या साली, फुलांचे निर्माल्य यांचाच खताप्रमाणे वापर करून त्यांनी झाडापेडांसाठी गच्चीवर जमीन बनवली. मात्र, शिजवलेलं, शिळंपाकं अन्न किंवा मांसजन्य पदार्थ ते नेहमीच टाळतात.

पल्बिक हेल्थ इंजिनीयरिंगमधून मास्टर (द्विपदवीधर) मिळवलेले दामले आपल्या व्यस्त जीवनात वेळात वेळ काढून आपल्या गच्चीवरील शेतीची काटेकोरपणे देखभाल करतात. सध्या दामले यांनी बागेला चांगलं खत मिळावं, या हेतूने गांडूळ खताचा प्रयोग सुरू केलाय.

दामलेंना या हिरव्या गच्चीवर पपईप्रमाणे आंबा रोपही लावायचं असून मागील वर्षी या शेतात सहा किलो वजनाचा कोहळा वेलीवर झुलत होता, तर सुरण दोन किलो इतक्या वजनाचा भरला.

मातीशिवाय शेती करण्याचा अनुभव सांगताना दामले सांगतात, ''माझ्या आणि मित्रमंडळींच्या घरांत निवडलेल्या भाजीपाल्याचं व फळांचं तसेच फुलांचं निर्माल्य मी गोळा करतो व अनेकदा दादरच्या मंडईतूनसुद्धा मी हा कचरा जमवतो. नंतर त्यावर पाण्याचा शिडकावा करून तो सर्व पालापाचोळा तळ नसलेल्या कुंडीमध्ये भरून ठेवतो.

काही दिवसांनंतर या कचऱ्याचं विघटन होऊन त्यांचं आकारमान मूळ कचऱ्याच्या दहा टक्के होतं.

अशा तऱ्हेने तयार झालेल्या या सेंद्रिय मातीमध्ये फुलझाडं चांगल्या प्रकारे वाढू शकतात. कारण सजीव सृष्टीमध्ये वावरणारी उर्जा ही वनस्पतींच्या व प्राण्यांच्या अन्नसाखळीमधूनच सतत फिरत असते.''

निसर्गात निर्माण झालेली कोणतीही गोष्ट कधीच निरुपयोगी नसते. उलट, त्यातील सेंद्रिय पदार्थांचं योग्य पद्धतीने विघटन केल्यास त्याचा पुनर्वापरही होऊ शकतो. हे विघटन वातनिरपेक्ष (Aeaerobic) म्हणजे हवेचा संपर्क न येता होतं किंवा वातसापेक्ष (Aerobic) म्हणजे संपर्कात अशा दोन प्रकारे होऊ शकतं. पण कचऱ्याचं घरच्या घरी विघटन घडवून आणण्याइतकी मानसिकता अजून लोकांमध्ये तयार झाली नसल्यामुळे कचरा हाताळणं त्यांना घाणेरडा प्रकार वाटतो. गांडूळ शेतीमध्ये तर गांडुळांचा वावर त्यांना किळसवाणा वाटतो.

दामले यांचा हा उपक्रम अजूनही प्रयोगावस्थेत असून तो प्रत्येक सोसायटीत केल्यास अधिक यशस्वी होईल, असं त्यांना वाटतं. त्यासाठी सर्वांना मार्गदर्शन करण्याचीही त्यांची तयारी आहे.

अधिक माहितीसाठी, प्रभात व्ह्यू, तळमजला, ८४, लखमसी नप्पू मार्ग, दादर (पूर्व), मुंबई - ४०० ०१४

या त्यांच्या निवासस्थानी व शेतीविषयक मार्गदर्शनासाठी, मराठी विज्ञान परिषदेचा दूरध्वनी क्र. २५२२ ४७१४ आणि ईमेल mavipa@vsnl. com वेब www. mavipa.org येथे संपर्क साधा.

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अवि

मॉडेलिंगच्या जगात

एकेकाळी फारशी प्रतिष्ठा नसलेल्या मॉडेलिंगच्या कलेला आता लोकमान्यता राजमान्यताही मिळालीय. कालौघात बदललेल्या एकूणच जीवनशैलीचा हा परिपाक म्हणावा लागेल. आहार, राहणीमान साऱ्यातच अमूलाग्र बदल होत गेला व त्याचा फायदा जाहिरातदारांनी घेतला नसता तर नवल? यानिमित्ताने हुशारी बरोबरच स्मार्टनेसला सुद्धा खूप महत्त्व आलं. सौंदर्य आणि व्यक्तिमत्त्व खुबण्यासाठी बाजारात विविध सौंदर्य प्रसाधनं, नित्यनवे फॅशनचे कपडे व तंदुरुस्ती का राज सांगणाऱ्या अनेक कंपन्या पुढे सरसावल्या. स्पर्धेच्या युगात आपलं उत्पादन ग्राहकांपर्यंत योग्य प्रकारे पोहोचवण्यासाठी जाहिरातींचा मोठा प्रमाणावर उपयोग करण्यात येऊ लागला. त्यादृष्टीने जाहिरात हे एक 'क्रिएटिव्ह आर्ट' आहे हेच खरं! ही जाहिरात केवळ उत्तम असून चालत नाही, तर लोकांपर्यंत ती खऱ्या अर्थाने पोहचावी लागते. ग्राहकांनी बाजारात आल्यानंतर 'बघुया तरी घेऊन' असा प्रभाव पाडण्यासाठी ग्राहकांची मानसिकता बदलण्यास त्यांनी भाग पाडलं पाहिजे. ग्राहकराजास आकर्षित करण्यासाठी साहजिकच मग नित्य ताज्या चेहऱ्यांची निवड होऊ लागली. यात सेलिब्रिटीज मंडळींचाही मोठा सहभाग असतो. आणि या धडपडीतूनच आज मॉडेलिंगच्या व्यवसायाला ग्लॅमर आलंय. आज समाजातील सर्व स्तरातील व वयोगटांतील लोक या व्यवसायात येत आहेत. यामागे प्रसिद्धी प्रमाणेच झटपट पैसा हेदेखील प्रमुख आकर्षण झालंय.

तर अशा या मॉडेलिंगच्या क्षेत्रात अचानकपणे पाऊल ठेवलेल्या दीपाली श्रीराम केळकरशी यासंदर्भात संवाद साधला. दीपालीचं शालेय शिक्षण मुलुंडच्या वामनराव भुरंजन शाळेत, तर महाविद्यालयीन शिक्षम मुलुंड कॉलेज ऑफ कॉमर्समध्ये झालं. कॉमर्सची पदवी धारण केलेली दीपाली या क्षेत्रात कशी आली, हा प्रश्न विचारता ती म्हणाली, ''सातवीपर्यंत मी खूपच लाजाळू होते. मात्र आठवीत माझ्या शेजारी बसणारी मुलगी अगदी विरुद्ध स्वभावाची होती. अभ्यासात ती हुसार होतीच. पण इतर कित्येक कार्यक्रमांतसुद्धा ती भाग घेत असे. ती अतिशय उत्साही होती. त्यामुळेच वर्षभर तिच्याशेजारी बसून माझ्यावरही प्रभाव पडला असावा. तिच्यामुळेच नंतर मीदेखील स्पर्धांतून भाग घेऊ लागले. मी वकृत्व स्पर्धेसाठी प्रथमच स्टेजवर बसले तेव्हा माझंच नाव पहिल्यांदा पुकारलं गेलं आणि मी गडबडले. त्यावेळी बक्षिस मिळालं नाही, पण सभाधीटपणा आला. नववीत मात्र मी चक्क पहिलं बक्षिस पटकावलं. त्यानंतर मात्र आत्मविश्वासाने मी सतत वकृत्त्व स्पर्धा, काव्यवाचन इत्यादी स्पर्धांतून बक्षिस मिळवतं राहिले. कॉलेजच्या वाङ:मय मंडळाच्या कार्यक्रमात कथाकथनही करत असे. कथाकथनाचे एकूण ७०-७५ कार्यक्रम मी केले. हळदीकुंकू समारंभ, फॅमिली गेट टुगेदर, दत्त जयंती उत्सव अशा छोट्या प्रसंगी व. पु. काळे, पु. भा. भावे यांच्या कथा कथनाचा कार्यक्रम मी करत असे. मुग्धा चिटणीस यांच्या कथाकथनांचा माझ्यावर प्रभाव होता असं म्हणता येईल.''

आकाशवाणीवर दीपाली सुरुवातीला एकटीच व नंतर सहकलाकारांच्या समवेत 'ऋतिकथा' नावाचा कार्यक्रम साजरा करायची. नंतर काही शाळांतूनही हे कार्यक्रम तिनं सादर केले. 'नॅब' या अंधसंस्थेसाठी काही नाटकांचं रेकॉर्डिंग केलं. पूर्वी 'कॉफी हाऊस' हा कार्यक्रम आकाशवाणीवर सादर व्हायचा. त्यातही तिचा सहभाग होता.

मात्र, असे विविध कार्यक्रम सादर करूनदेखील आपण अभिनयाकडे किंवा मॉडेलिंगकडे वळणार असं तिला कधी वाटलं नव्हतं. पदवीपर्यंतच शिक्षण घेतल्यानंतर दीपालीने कॉम्प्यूटरचं प्रशिक्षण घेतलं. तिला नोकरी करण्यात रस होता व म्हणून 'ॲपटेक'मध्ये काही वर्षं नोकरीही केली. याच काळात 'नटसम्राट' नव्या संचात करण्यासाठी नवे कलाकार हवेत अशी जाहिरात पेपरात आली होती. त्या नाटकाच्या ऑडिशनसाठी ती गेली असता पुरुषोत्तम दारव्हेकरांना तिचं वाचन आवडलं. परंतु नंतर कसं कुणास ठाऊक, ते नाटक नव्या स्वरूपात आलंच नाही व दीपालीची संधी हुकली. एक तर तिचं फॉमेली बॅक ग्राऊंड नाट्यव्यवसायाशी संबंधित नव्हतं व या क्षेत्रात कोणाशीही तिचा खास परिचय नव्हता.

मॉडेलिंगच्या क्षेत्रात दीपाली तशी ध्यानीमनी नसताना आली. एकदा मैत्रिणीचं फोटोसेशन करण्यासाठी तिच्यासोबत ती जाणार होती. परंतु आयत्या वेळी मैत्रिण आजारी पडली आणि दीपालीला जावं लागलं. खरं म्हणजे तेव्हा फोटोसेशन करण्याचा तिचा विचारही नव्हता. पण प्रसिद्ध फोटोग्राफर आशिष सोमपुरा त्यावेळी तिला म्हणाले, ''तू का नाही पोर्टपोलिओ करून घेत?'' दीपालीला काय वाटलं कोणास ठाऊक, तिने पोर्टपोलिओ करून घेतला व को-ऑर्डिनेटरकडे फोटो दिले. झालं, तेव्हापासून मॉडेलिंगचं दालन खुलं झालं. मुंबईतील एका प्रसिद्ध ज्वेलर्ससाठी तिनं सर्वप्रथम जाहिरात केली. तो एक वेगळा अनुभव होता. त्यावेळी खास मराठी पारंपरिक दागिने पहायलाही मिळाले आणि घालायलाही. ते अलंकार पाहून दीपालीचे डोळे आणि मन दोन्ही तृप्त झालं होतं. दीपाली म्हणते, ''याच काळात १३ डिसेंबर १९९७ रोजी माझा श्रीरामशी विवाह झाला. तसा आमचा आधीपासून परिचय होता. आकाशवाणीवरील कार्यक्रमात श्रीराम माझा सहकलाकार होता. लग्नानंतरही मॉडेलिंग करत होते. याबाबतीत मी श्रीरामशी आधीच बोलले होते. मी तशी अटच घातली होती. सासू-सासऱ्यांनीदेखील हरकत घेतली नाही. श्रीराम स्वत: यावर ठाम होता. काही दूरदर्शन मालिकांमधून (तीसरा डोळा, अपराधी, गीतारहस्य, सखी यासारख्या कार्यक्रमासाठी सूत्रधार म्हणून) काम चालू होतं.



एकीकडे जाहिरातीही चालू होत्या. पण त्यंच्या शूटिंगच्या वेळ फारच अनियमित व गैरसोयीच्या वाटू लागल्याने हे काम पूर्ण वेळ करण्यापेक्षा त्याच क्षेत्राशी समांतर असं काहीतरी करावं, असं वाटल्यानंतर मॉडेल को-ऑर्डिनेटरची कल्पना मला सुचली. या क्षेत्रात असल्याने माझ्या ओळखी होत्या. फोटोग्राफर, एजन्सीजशीही संपर्क होता. त्यांच्या जाहिरातीच्या मागणीनुसार सतत नवे चेहरे पुरवणे यासाठी चांगल्या फोटोग्राफरकडून पोर्टफोलियो करून घेणं, ते फोटोनंतर एजन्सीकडे पाठवणं अशा स्वरूपाचं हे काम होतं. यात हळूहळू बस्तान बसत गेलं.''

मॉडेलिंगच्या व्यवसायाबद्दल दीपाली भरभरून बोलत होती. या क्षेत्रात झटपट व बऱ्यापैकी पैसा आणि प्रसिद्धी मिळत असल्याने सतत नित्य नवे चेहरे या क्षेत्रात येत आहेत. तरुण मुलामुलींना तर क्षेत्राचं खूपच आकर्षण आहे. आता तर खुद्द पालकच आपल्या मुलांना या



व्यवसायात धाडतात. पण या मुलांना फक्त पैसा दिसतो हे दुर्दैव. त्यामागचे कष्ट त्यांना दिसत नाहीत. सर्वप्रथम चांगल्या फोटोग्राफरकडून विविध पोझमधील पोर्टफोलिओ करून घेणं आवश्यक असतं. त्यामुळे आपल्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वातील पैलू नव्यानं समोर येतात आणि आत्मविश्वासही वाढतो.

या क्षेत्रात टिकून राहण्यासाठी अभिनयाचं थोडं तरी अंग असायला हवं. कारण जाहिरातींद्वारा जे सांगायचं असतं ते प्रभावीपणे ग्राहकांच्या मनावर ठसवण्यासाठी अभिनयाची गरज असतेच. शिवाय या क्षेत्रातील संबंधित व्यक्तींशी चांगले संबंध ठेवायलाच हवेत. लाचारी नव्हे तर नम्रता असावी. वर्तणूक चांगली असावी. स्वतःला कधी अंडरएस्टीमेट अथवा ओव्हर एस्टीमेटही करू नये. काहींच्या डोक्यात यशामुळे लगेच हवा शिरते. तसं न होता यश आणि प्रसिद्धी मिळाली तरी पाय जमिनीवरच हवेत. शूटींगसाठी वेळेवर पोहोचणं, दिलेला शब्द पाळणं खूप महत्त्वाचं असतं.

दीपालीला या क्षेत्रात चांगलेच अनुभव आले. तिच्या म्हणण्याप्रमाणे चांगले संबंध प्रस्तापित होणं आपल्यावरच अवलंबून असत. कोण किती पाण्यात आहे ते पोर्टफोलिओ करतानाच लक्षात येतं. अत्यंत मॉड फोटोसेशन करणारेही असतात. आता प्रौढ स्त्री-पुरुषही या मॉडेलिंग क्षेत्रात



मोठ्या संख्येनं येत आहेत. विशेषतः सेवानिवृत्ती घेतलेले अनेक प्रौढ या क्षेत्रात आले आहेत. एकतर वेळ चांगला जातो आणि शिवाय पैसाही मिळतो. अगदी लहान मुलंही उत्साहाने धीटपणे पुढे आलेली दिसतात.

ही आहे अजिता कुलकर्णी, आजची आघाडीची मॉडेल! छंद म्हणून या क्षेत्रात वळलेल्या अजिताला या व्यवसायात येण्याची आवड खूप दिवसांपासून होती. तिची मोठी बहिण या क्षेत्रात असल्याने अजिताचा शिरकाव तसा सुलभ झाला. एकदा सहज ऑडिशन केलं असता त्यात ती पासही झाली व या क्षेत्रात शिरकाव झाला. पण इथे रुजायचं झाल्यास पोर्टफोलिओ



करायलाच हवा हे जाणवलं. म्हणूनच आशिष सोमपूरा यांच्याकडून पोर्टपोलिओ करून घेतला. अजिताला नशिबानं साथ दिली खरी, पण त्याचबरोबर त्यात तिची मेहनतही होती. आत्तापर्यंत तिने कोलगेट, आर्चिस कार्डस्, ओडोमॉस, उजाला, पॉण्डस, विप्रो शिकेकाई सोप इत्यादी जाहीराती केल्या आहेत. सध्या ओडोमॉस, विप्रो लाइटस, पिल्सबरी आटा, व्हील डिटर्जंटच्या जाहिराती ती करतेय. खूप मेहनतीची तयारी असेल तर कामं सहजपणे मिळत जातात. अजिताने आता हे क्षेत्र पूर्णवेळ करिअर म्हणून स्वीकारलंच. याशिवाय 'कितने कूल है हम', 'सोनपरी' या मालिकांतही तिने काम केलंय. शिवाय 'तेरा मेरा साथ रहे', 'बधाई हो बधाई', 'बिनधास्त' या चित्रपटातून भूमिका केल्या आहेत. तिने आत्तापर्यंत साधारणपणे शंभर कमर्शियल जाहिराती केल्या आहेत. या क्षेत्रात तिचा अनुभव चांगलाच आहे.

अजिताचे पती डॉक्टर असून ती स्वतः पॅथॉलोजिस्ट आहे. पतीच्या पाठिंब्यामुळेच ती या क्षेत्रात मनमोकळेपणे काम करतेय. पतीची व सासू-सासऱ्यांची साथ असल्यामुळे ती आऊटडोअर शूटिंगसाठीही (पाच-सहा दिवसांच्या) जाते. सासू-सासऱ्यांनी मुलांच्या अभ्यासापासूनची सर्व जबाबदारी आनंदाने घेतलीय. याबाबतीत ती स्वतःला भाग्यवान समजते. त्यामुळेच गेली सात वर्षे ती मॉडेलिंग करतेय. मात्र पैशाच्या मोहापायी शिक्षण अर्धवट सोडणं योग्य नव्हे असं ती म्हणते. अजिताला अभिनयात रस आहेच आणि एखादी चांगली भूमिका व चांगले लोक मिळाल्यास अभिनयाकडे ती वळेलही.

आता पाटकर दाम्पत्याविषयी थोडसं श्री व सौ तारा पाटकर हे दाम्पत्य नियमितपणे मॉडेलिंग करतं. ताराबाईंना रेडिओ, रंगभूमी, दूरदर्शन मालिका, चित्रपट इत्यादी सर्वच माध्यमांचा अनुभव असल्यामुळे व मॉडेलिंगसाठी आवश्यक असणारे अभिनय गुण असल्यामुळे त्यांच्या जाहिराती जिवंत वाटतात. तारा याविषयी म्हणतात की, या छंदामुळे वेळ चांगला जातोच शिवाय वयोमानानुसार येणारी बारीक सारीक दुखणीसुद्धा विसरली जातात. लोकांत मिसळल्यामुळे नव्या जगाशी नातं जुळतंच शिवाय पैसासुद्धा मिळतोच. यानिमित्तानं घराबाहेर पडण्याची संधी मिळते व नीटनेटकं राहण्याची सवय जडते. आयुष्य कंटाळवाणं वाटत नाही. आत्तापर्यंत त्यांनी डिकोल्ड वेपोरब, बजाज फायनान्स, डाबर हेअर ऑईल, सफोला ऑईल, फॉर्च्युन ऑइल अशा कित्येक जाहिराती केल्या आहेत. आजही उभयता जाहिराती करत असतात. व्यवस्था चांगली असेल तर जाहिरातींसाठी बाहेरगावीसुद्धा जातात.

- माधुरी महाशब्दे ●

आणि तिने लग्नापूर्वी पुष्कळ गुण उधळलेले असूनही ती गर्भार मात्र राहिली नसती तर तू काय करणार होतास?'

'पण मामा... इथे तिच्या पोटात गर्भ आहे, तिचा काळा इतिहास माझा भविष्यकाळ अंधारमय करणार आहे.'

'या मुद्याचा आपण प्रत्यक्ष तिथे जाऊन विचार करू. पण केवळ या एका क्षुल्लक गोष्टीसाठी घटस्फोटाचा मार्ग योग्य नव्हे. अरे ती गेली तर तो कुत्राही उपाशी राहिला! जनावरालाही येवढा लळा लावणारी शब्दा चारित्र्यहीन कशी असू शकेल? भगवान श्रीकृष्णाने शत्रूलाही शंभर गुन्हे माफ केले होते. आपण आपल्या माणसाचा एक गुन्हा माफ का करू नये ? ऊठ...तिथे जाऊ... प्रत्यक्ष तिला विचारू....'

'पण मामा.....'

'चांगल्या गोष्टींना उशीर करायचा नसतो....चल ' आणि दोघेही उठले.

शब्दाच्या आईने दोघांचे स्वागत केले. मोत्याही उड्या मारत आला आणि अजयचे हात चाटू लागला.

'शब्दा कुठे आहे?' मामांनी विचारले.

'बसा... पाणी घ्या' जडावलेल्या अंत:करणाने आई म्हणाली आणि काही अशुभाची चाहुल त्या दोघांना लागली. ते बसले.

'मामा,'आई म्हणाली, 'शब्दाकडून चूक घडलीय. ती कशी घडली हे तिनं परवा आम्हाला सांगितलं. तत्पूर्वी आम्हाला काहीही ठावूक नव्हतं तरीही आम्ही तुम्हाला फसवलं, असं तुम्हाला वाटले असेल. माझ्या मुलीच्या अपराधाची मी माफी मागते.'

'छे ! छे !'

'शब्दाकडून ही चूक कशी घडली ते मी तुम्हाला सांगते ' आणि ती सगळी हकीकत तिनं सांगितली.

मामा म्हणाले, 'बघ अजय, मी म्हणालो होतो, तसेच घडलेय ना ? शब्दा निर्दोष आहे. तिचा स्वीकार तुला करावाच लागेल.?

'पण मामा, ते तिच्या पोटातलं बाळ....?'

'जावईबापू' पदराने डोळे पूसत आई म्हणाली, 'त्याची काळजी आता नको ...'

'म्हणजे?'

'शब्दाने मनाला फार लावून घेतलं होते तुमच्याकडून आल्यापासून. काल दु:खाच्या आवेगान ती बेभान झाली आणि तिनं वेड्यासारख्या पोटावर बुक्क्या मारून घेतल्या त्यामुळे तिच्या गर्भपात झाला. कालपासून ती दवाखान्यात आहे.... मी आत्ताच परतलेय. तिचे पप्पा तिथं आहेत. रक्तस्राव खूप झाला. पण आता ती धोक्याबाहेर आहे. या वेळी तमचा जर आधार तिला मिळाला तर ती झपाट्याने बरी होईल.'

'मामी...मी तिला आधार देईन... मी तिचा स्वीकार करीन...कोणत्या दवाखान्यात आहे ती ?' अजयने पृच्छा केली.

'अजय, तुझ्यातल्या देवत्वाला मी वंदन करतो' मामा समाधानाने म्हणाले आणि त्यांनी बोटांनी डोळ्यातले पाणी निपटले.

आठ दिवसांनी शब्दा पूर्णपणे बरी झाली. अजय तिच्याजवळ रात्रंदिवस बसून होता. दोघांचे देह दोन असले तरी जीव एक झाले होते. शब्दा अतीव समाधानी झाली होती अजयच्या वागण्यामुळे.

डिसचार्ज मिळाल्यानंतर अजय तिला घेऊन मिरजेतून कोल्हापूरकडे निघाला. त्याची गाडी चौकात आली. आणि समोर गर्दी बघून त्याने ती एका बाजूला थांबवली. 'काय झाले? ' त्याने एकाला विचारले.

'अपघात..... ट्रकखाली एक तरूण सापडला. त्याचे दोन्ही पाय चेंगरून निकामी झाले आहेत.'

अजय व शब्दा दोघेही बाहेर आले व गर्दीकडे धावले. लोकांना बाजूला सरकावून ते अपघातग्रस्त तरूणाजवळ आले...

तो बेशुद्ध पडला होता. टायर वरुन गेल्यामुळे त्याच्या पायाच्या हाडांचा चुरा झाला होता. भिजलेल्या कापडाप्रमाणे त्याचे पाय जमिनीशी अस्ताव्यस्त पसरले होते. रक्ताचा सडा पसरला होता. शब्दानं त्याचा चेहरा पाहिला मात्र....

तिला गरगरू लागले.

'अजय.....चल....मला सहन नाही होत.'

अजयने तिला सावरले आणि दोघे गाडीत बसले. अजयने दुसरीकडून गाडी बाहेर काढली.

'शब्दा भयानक ना....'

'हो....'

'आयुष्यातून तो बरबाद झाला.'

'दुसऱ्याचं आयुष्य बरबाद करणाऱ्याचं आणखी काय होणार ?' शब्दा उद्‌गारली.

'म्हणजे ?' चमकून अजयने विचारले.

'तो सुधीर होता....ज्यांन मला फसवलं होतं....'

- प्रा. विनोद गायकवाड
मराठी विभाग प्रमुख, कर्नाटक विद्यापीठ,
कित्तूर राणी चन्नम्मा पदव्युत्तर केंद्र,
बेळगांव. फोन - ४६९७३०



बेकारी व गरीबी (होय, गरीबी!) ने संत्रस्त झालेल्या भयग्रस्त नागरिकांना त्यांचा सल्ला आहे, ''काय व कसे करायचेय ते शिकायचेय ? मग हायतीला चल !'', हायती हा इवलासा देश. हुकूमशाहीखाली भरडला जाणारा. अमेरिकेचा अर्थातच हुकूमशहाना वरदहस्त ! पण तेथील जनता या सर्वाना दाद न देता सहभागी लोकशाहीचे समर्थ प्रयोग करण्यात मग्न आहे.

या थोर विचारवंताची जी विचारवंतांची व्याख्या केलीय ती पाहण्यासारखी आहे; ''''अशी व्याख्या करुन मग चॉम्स्की म्हणतात की या व्याख्येप्रमाणे अनेक उच्चशिक्षित बाद ठरतात व अनेक अल्पशिक्षित वा अशिक्षित या कसोटीला उतरतात. जगातील जनसामान्यांची बाजू घेवून झोंडशाहीविरुद्ध आवाज उठवणाऱ्या व्हिएतनाम युद्धाविरुद्ध सत्याग्रह करुन अमेरिकन जेलची हवा खाणारा हा विद्वान आज बहुधा जगातील अव्वल प्रभावी व प्रगल्भ विचारवंत असेल. या बापाचे जीवन पाहूनच याची एकमेव कन्या निकारागुवात ग्रामीण परिवर्तनाच्या चळवळीत सामील झाली असावी.

आनंद व समाधानाची बाब म्हणजे अमेरिकन माध्यमानी दुर्लक्षलेला हा विचारवंत आपल्या भारतभूमीत एकदम लोकप्रिय. गेल्यावर्षी नोव्हेंबर महिन्यात त्यांची चेन्नई, कोलकोता, तिरुवनंतरम् व दिल्ली येथे जाहीर व्याख्यानं झाली त्याला झालेली गर्दी एखाद्या सिनेमा नटाला लाजवेल अशी होती. चेन्नई मध्ये त्यांचे ज्या दिवशी भाषण होते त्या दिवशी वाहनांचा संप होता तरी ३५०० लोक पंधरा-सोळा किलोमीटर चालून हजर झाले होते.

आपल्या भारत प्रेमाविषयी ते दोन कारण सांगतात, ''एक म्हणजे माझा विषय भाषाशास्त्र ! याचा उगम तुमच्या देशात २५०० वर्षापूर्वी पाणिनीच्या संस्कृत व्याकरणात झाला ! दुसरे कारण असे की समाज परिवर्तनासाठी सामान्य माणसांचे अनेक समर्थ प्रयत्न मला इथे सातत्याने चाललेले दिसतात.''

प्रस्थापिताचा उदो उदो करत सामान्य माणसाला विचारशून्य, दिशाहीन, किंकर्तव्यमूढ ग्राहक बनवणाऱ्या प्रसार माध्यमांच्यावर प्रकाश झोत टाकणाऱ्या या ऋषीचे आपण ऐकणार का हा कळीचा मुद्दा आहे.

दिलीप कामत, बेळगाव



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Prosperous New Year

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Near Maruti Temple, Belgaum - 2.

विथ् एशिया'' या त्यांच्या पुस्तकाने पहिल्यांदाच (१९६९) अमेरिका कशा रीतीने लाओस, कंपूचिया, फिलीपाईन्स, पूर्व तिमोर व व्हिएतनाम या एशिया खंडातील देशांवर साम्राज्यवादी हल्ले करुन अनन्वित अत्याचार करीत आहे हे आकडेवारीसह त्यांनी जगासमोर मांडले. सोविएत युनियन, चीन व कम्युनिझम् यांचा बागुलबुवा खडा करुन गरीब देशातील जनतेचे लोकशाही लढे चिरडून टाकण्यासाठी अमेरिकेने आतापर्यंत ५४ हुकूमशहाना कशी मदत केली याचा रोचक पण अत्यंत भीषण इतिहासच त्यांनी मांडला.

चॉम्स्की यांच्या अलिकडच्या (इ.स.२०००) पुस्तकात आजही अमेरिका जगभर कशी दंडेली करते आहे याची सविस्तर नोंद दिली आहे. पुस्तकाचे नाव आहे रोग स्टेटस् (Rougue States). या पुस्तकातील क्युबावरील प्रकरण स्पष्टपणे दाखवते की अमेरिका जी युद्धे जगावर लादते त्यांचा रशिया, चीन, कम्युनिझम् रोखण्याशी काहीही संबंध नाही. वस्तुस्थिती अशी आहे की अमेरिकन् क्रांतीच्या काळापासूनच क्युबाचा कब्जा घेणे अमेरिकेच्या अजेंडावर आहे. त्यावेळी कम्युनिस्ट राष्ट्रांचा उदयही झाला नव्हता. जॉन क्विन्सी ॲडम्स या माजी राष्ट्राध्यक्षानी अमेरिकन सिनेटमध्ये जाहीर केले होते की क्युबा ताब्यात घेणे अत्यंत निकडीचे आहे. क्युबाचे हे भूत आजही अमेरिकेवर सवार आहे. चॉम्स्की यांनी त्यांच्या विशिष्ट शैलीत माजी राष्ट्राध्यक्ष जॉन केनेडी यांचा एक किस्सा सांगितला आहे. केनेडींच्या काळी क्युबाच्या भीतीने अमेरिकन् सरकारला ग्रासले होते. क्युबानी अमेरिकेला 'गिळंकृत करु नये यासाठी एक व्यापक आघाडी बांधावी' अशी टूम काढली व मेक्सिको देशानी या आघाडीत सामील व्हावे असे त्यांनी आवाहन केले. मेक्सिकन् राजदूत त्याला नकार देत म्हणाले की जर मी सांगू लागलो की क्युबा कडून देशाला भीती आहे तर माझे चार कोटी देशवासी हसून हसून मरतील !

क्युबाचा लॅटिन अमेरिका खंडातील देशांवर होणाऱ्या प्रभावाने चिंतित होऊन केनेडीनी ज्येष्ठ इतिहासतज्ज्ञ आर्थर श्लेशिंजर यांच्या अध्यक्षतेखाली एक समिती नेमली. या समितीने जो अहवाल दिलाय तो चॉम्स्की यांनी उद्धृत केलाय. या इतिहास पंडितानी लिहिलयं, ''क्युबाच्या उदाहरणाने या खंडातील इतर देशाचे नागरिकही आता चांगले मानवी जीवन जगण्याची स्वप्ने पाहू लागले आहेत. (!) आपले भवितव्य आपण जनतेनेच ठरवावे ही कॅस्ट्रोंची विचारसरणी पसरत आहे. कॅस्ट्रो विचारांची लागण होणे अमेरिकेच्या सुरक्षेच्या दृष्टीनी अत्यंत धोक्याचे आहे. (!)'' सोविएत् युनियनचा बोऱ्या वाजला तरी अमेरिकेची क्युबा विषयीची भीती काही कमी झालेली नाही. अमेरिका व त्याची .....राष्ट्र यांनी गेली ४० वर्षे क्युबावर आर्थिक बहिष्कार टाकला आहे. आता रशियाचीही मदत थांबली आहे.परंतु क्युबाची जनता आजही समर्थपणे प्रगतीची वाट चालते आहे. आणि नेमका याचाच जाच अमेरिकेला होतो. कॅस्ट्रो विचारांची लागण इतर



देशाना होऊ नये यासाठी अमेरिका जागरुक असते. यातूनच मग क्युबातील यशस्वी क्रांतीनंतर चे गव्हेरा बोलिव्हियात काम करण्यास जातो त्याचा सी आय् ए खून करते. चिलीची जनता आयेंदेना निवडणुकीद्वारे राष्ट्राध्यक्ष बनवतो त्यानाही सी आय् ए खलास करुन हुकूमशाही आणते. फिडेल कॅस्ट्रोला खलास करण्याचे १३ कट कसे केले व ते सारे कसे फसले याची सी आय् ए चेच दाखले देत चॉम्स्की दाखवून देतात की अमेरिकेला खरी भीती आहे ती खऱ्या लोकशाहीचीच !

अमेरिकेचे ढोंगी लोकशाही प्रेम उघड करताना चॉम्स्की यांनी दुसऱ्या एका श्रेष्ठ अमेरिकन् लेखकाचे शंभर वर्षापूर्वीचे विचार उद्धृत केले आहेत. मार्क ट्वेन या लेखकाचा विचार असा आहे, *'' देवाच्या दयेनी अमेरिकेकडे तीन अनमोल गोष्टी आहेत. एक : भीषण स्वातंत्र्य, दोन : सद्विवेकाचे स्वातंत्र्य व तीन : हे दोन्ही न वापरण्याचे व्यावहारिक शहाणपण !''*

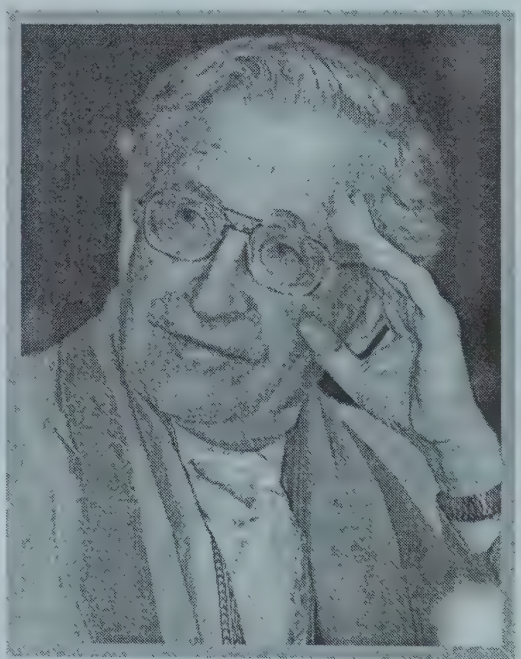
चॉम्स्की यांच्या ''क्लास वॉर'' (वर्गयुद्ध) या अलीकडच्या पुस्तकात त्यानी अमेरिकेच्या नेतृत्वाखाली सध्या जे तथाकथित जागतिकीकरणाची प्रक्रिया चालू आहे त्याचे बिंग फोडले आहे. या पुस्तकातील एका प्रकरणाचे शीर्षक या प्रक्रियेचे यथार्थ वर्णन करते, ''टेकींग फ्रॉम दि नीडी अँड गिविंग इट टु दि ग्रीडी''! जागतिकीकरण, उदारीकरण व खासगीकरण याचा अन्वयार्थ चॉम्स्की सांगतात, ''सोशलायझेशन् ऑफ रिस्क अँड लॉसेस, प्रायव्हेटायझेशन् ऑफ गेन्स अँड प्रॉफिट !'' जगातील १% लोक बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपन्याद्वारे ९०% नैसर्गिक संपत्तीवर कब्जा मिळवून श्रमिकांचे जीवन कसे अस्थिर, असुरक्षित व निकृष्ट करीत आहेत याची आकडेवारी त्यांनी दिलेली वाचली तर विषयाचे गांभिर्य लक्षात येते. चॉम्स्की यांना याहून अधिक चिंता वाटते ती या गोष्टीची की आता देशांची सरकारे या बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपन्यांची हस्तक बनत आहेत व आपले सार्वभौमत्व गमावत आहेत.चॉम्स्की म्हणतात की सरकार भ्रष्ट असले तरी आपण त्याबाबत काही करु शकतो, जबाबदार धरु शकतो. पण खाजगी कार्पोरेट बहुदेशी कंपन्या या पूर्णत: निरंकुश असतात.

अशी गंभीर चिंता चॉम्स्की व्यक्त करीत असले तरी ते मुळीच निराशावादी नाहीत. अमेरिकेतील वाढत्या

हे नोम चॉम्स्की कोण ?

-दिलीप कामत, बेळगाव.

या वर्षीची ११ सप्टेंबरची वर्तमानपत्रं वाचलेली आठवतात तुम्हांला ? गेल्या वर्षी लादेनच्या अल् कायदा संघटनेच्या आत्महत्या पथकानी न्यूयॉर्कच्या वर्ल्ड ट्रेड सेंटरवर हल्ला करुन जमीनदोस्त केल्याच्या भीषण आठवणी ताज्या करण्याच काम केवळ अमेरिकेनेच नव्हे तर आपल्याही वर्तमानपत्रानी इमाने इतबारे व अहमहमिकेनी रंगीत फोटो वगैरे छापून चोखपणे बजावले. साडेचार हजार निरपराध्यांचा बळी घेण्याचे अघोरी कृत्य करणाऱ्या लादेनच्या दहशतवादी कृत्याचा निषेध, दुर्दैवी अकाली मरणास सामोरे जावे लागलेल्यांविषयी श्रद्धांजली व त्यांच्या मागे उरलेल्या दु:खतप्त नातेवाईकाना सांत्वन असा सारा पद्धतशीर प्रकार पार पडला. परंतु लादेनला अद्दल घडविण्यासाठी अमेरिकेने अफगाणिस्थानवर तुफानी बाँब हल्ले करुन ज्या हजारो निरपराध नागरिकांचा बळी घेतला त्यांची आठवण किती वर्तमानपत्रानी वा वाचकांनी ठेवली ? अगोदरच दुष्काळाच्या कराळ छायेत वावरणाऱ्या अफगाण नागरिकांना अमेरिकेने बाँबने मारले तरी एक नाहीतर हल्ल्याच्या भीतीने रानावनात पळवून लावून उपासमारी व रोगराईने यमसदनाला पाठवले. घरेदारे, इस्पितळे, दुकाने नष्ट झाल्याने जे दिर्घावधीचे परिणाम त्या गरीब देशवासीयांना भोगावे लागतील ते वेगळेच. मग आपण हे सारे कसे बरे विसरलो ?



हे सहजासहजी घडले नसून दृक्श्राव्य माध्यमांची ही करामत आहे. आज जगावर अमेरिकेचे साम्राज्य चालते व अमेरिकेचा अध्यक्ष हा दुनियेचा बादशहा असतो. तेव्हा अमेरिकेच्या कुणा नागरिकाच्या केसालाही धक्का लागला तर त्याची मोठी बातमी होते पण अमेरिकेच्या भरघोस पाठिंब्याने इंडोनेशियन सैन्य पूर्व तिमोर सारख्या छोट्या देशात घुसून अनन्य अत्याचार करतात व तेथील २/३ लोकसंख्येला कंठस्नान घालतात. या विषयी सी. एन्. एन्. वा बी. बी. सी. सारख्या विख्यात व तथाकथित तटस्थ वाहिन्या देखील ब्र काढत नाहीत याचा विचार आपण स्वतंत्र भारताचे नागरिक करणार कां?

या सारख्या जागतिक प्रश्नांकडे प्रभावीपणे लक्ष वेधण्याचे काम गेली चाळीसेक वर्षे सातत्याने करत असलेला एक थोर अमेरिकन विचारवंत ***नोम चॉम्स्की*** ! पेशाने चॉम्स्की प्राध्यापक आहेत. अमेरिकेच्या ख्यातनाम 'मॅसेचुसेट्स इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नॉलॉजी' मध्ये गेली पंचेचाळीस वर्षे भाषाशास्त्र शिकवण्याचे काम ते करत आले आहेत.या क्षेत्रातील त्यांची कामगिरी इतकी भरघोस आहे की त्यांना आधुनिक भाषाशास्त्राचे जनकच मानले जाते. परंतु भाषाशास्त्राशी काहीही संबंध नसलेल्यांना चॉम्स्की परिचित आहेत ते मानवी हक्कांच्या त्यांच्या अखंड परिश्रमामुळे. ''अॅट वॉर

by Terror

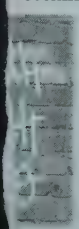
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commissioner of EU, etc — is spurious.

Finally, the July text is not very different from what was rejected at Cancun.

Let me give some facts. Domestic subsidies in agriculture in OECD countries were of the order of $250 billion in 1999-2001, which was almost 50% of their farm revenues. Did this money go to poor farmers? No. In the US, 25% of the farms received 89% of the support, an average of $275,000 or Rs 1.2 crore per farm. In Europe, 25% of farms received 70% of the support, an average of € 180,000 or Rs 90 lakh per farm. Poor farmer! Farm incomes in many OECD countries are higher than the national average income — 160% in France, 250% in Netherlands, 110% in United States and Japan. Import tariffs on rice in Japan are 490%. All this leads to an absurd situation wherein the subsidy on a cow in the EU exceeds the per capita income of most human beings on the globe! This data is from the report "Global Economics Prospect 2004" of the World Bank.

And yet, what do we hear when the recent raft framework is announced? Almost imultaneously, Jacques Chirac, president f France, along with a Swiss and a Japan- e representative, denounce the framework seeking 'unbalanced sacrifice' from the developed world. This is when the reality is almost the obverse. The text is fairly specific in respect of domestic support and export subsidy for the developed world and clearly to the interests of the US and EU, it leaves the interests and concerns of developing countries to future negotiations.



These are clever, orchestrated tics. First you create an artificial dead- e. A ministerial here, a change of guard ere. Then a half cooked text is thrown in the last minute. Of course, you can scuss it, but you can't really change it. here is no time! Then you scream that it is ell out to developing countries, try to ide them and create an impression that s is the best deal possible. After this, the uge — Kerry, the protectionist, cometh!

Ve want the Doha development round to ceed but only if it reflects the letter and rit of the Doha development agenda. It is developed world that is eager for market ess in large, developing countries. The eloping countries are faced more h the problem of developing internal abilities to respond to the challenges globalisation. At Cancun, developing ntries found their voice. They should not it in Geneva. For India at least, no ement is better than an agreement ch fails to take care of the legitimate sts of our farmers and industry.

should reject the draft in its nt form and work together with the ountries and the US and EU towards a just and balanced document. Informed opinion must be both vigilant and late in this respect.

Fighting Prejudice

Though there have been debates about the Muslim Personal Law being discriminatory against women, the gender bias in Hindu personal laws has largely been overlooked. For instance, the Hindu Succession Act has many clauses which are biased in favour of men. The women's movement in India has repeatedly agitated for removing the anti-women aspects in laws. ***Urvashi Butalia****, who has been at the forefront of the women's movement in India, speaks to* ***Archana Jahagirdar*** *about the need for gender equitable laws:*

The Hindu Succession Act is said to be discriminatory against women. Can you elaborate?

One can't look at the Hindu Succession Act in isolation. You have to look at it in conjunction with the Hindu Marriage Act. If you look at its history it has been difficult for lawmakers to give women equal rights. The law has differentiated between ancestral property and self-earned property. If a married couple purchases a property, it actually means a man's property. The wife's contribution isn't counted. At every level there is inferiorisation of the woman. In some states like Punjab and Haryana, a woman cannot inherit farm land. So if a woman's husband dies, the land will go to her husband's brothers.

What about a woman's own property?

The law actually doesn't say much on this. There is a lot of ambivalence.

Why hasn't the Hindu Succession Act been modified?

The Hindu law has been slow to change. The assumption is that the Hindu law is liberal and doesn't need to change, so the changes have been slower. It takes quite a long time for laws to change and, then, for those changes to be acceptable.

What are the key changes needed in the Hindu Succession Act?

It is much more important to have a gender-just civil code which would encompass all this. A uniform civil code itself is no guarantee for gender equality. If you say that Hindu laws are more liberal and govern everyone by them, you will lose liberal provisions that exist in other personal laws.

Who is resisting the changes needed in the laws?

A lot of women will simply say that they don't want to break up the family. The inequality is so naturalised in daily life that you don't protest. It's virtually impossible for women to access any court of redressal. If a woman takes her family to court, she knows that it will be an extremely lonely battle. Look at what happened to Shah Bano and Mary Roy. Even though Roy won her case she was completely isolated.

Is this in some ways a failure of the women's movement?

I think the feminist movement cannot perform miracles. People forget the enormous scale of problems and how minuscule the movement is. How can you deal with a problem of so many centuries in a few decades? Despite that the law has been a major pre-occupation within the movement. We have been successful in getting changes made in some laws like rape, sati, dowry as well as lobbying for a domestic violence Bill. It's not that the women's movement hasn't succeeded in modifying laws but we have also seen that changes don't amount to anything much. The rape law, for instance, has some good provisions but in interpretation and implementation, it becomes anti-women. The concerns are so vast that you can only inch along. Also, the state has to be responsive which has not been the case for a while.

Could you give specifics of laws that have been changed due to campaigns mounted by women's groups?

After the rape campaign in the 70s and the 80s, a clause was introduced by the state that the burden of proof in the case of custodial rape would be on the man. There was also a minimum mandatory punishment of 10 years if proven guilty. But again the implementation was problematic. The first case that came up after this clause was introduced was the Suman Rani case where even though the men involved were proven to be guilty, they were given only half the sentence. A writ filed by women's groups against it was thrown out. Due to pressure from women's groups, rape cases were also said to be held in camera. But despite the changes it did not change the definition of rape. Dowry laws were also changed due to the work done by women's groups. One change was giving and taking dowry was made criminal. And any woman dying mysteriously in the first seven years of marriage was to be investigated as a dowry death. Sati laws were also changed.

What other initiatives are required to change things on the ground?

There are many things around the law which need to be changed. The implementation mechanism has to become more effective. We have seen this with the dowry law. Though people have taken dowry cases to court, convictions are very few. So what's the use of such a law. If people saw that the law has teeth, it will serve its purpose. The Panchayati Raj legislation which reserves one-third seats for women has been successful because women's groups, state governments, the Central government have all worked together to make the legislation work effectively.



Udayshankar

Q A

It is much more important to have a gender-just civil code. A uniform civil code itself is no guarantee for gender equality... The inequality is so naturalised in daily life that you don't protest.

Russia fires back at US with Kalashnikovs

By C J Chivers

Zhevsk (Russia): The bazaar in this industrial city shows why Western companies regard Russia as a land of piracy. Bootlegged copies of new American movies 'King Arthur', 'Troy' and 'Spider-Man 2' sell for $3. Photoshop CS, a $600 program in Western stores, fetches $2.75.

Markets like this, found throughout Russia, have been a longstanding subject of diplomatic complaint. Washington contends that Russian intellectual-property pirates cost the US more than $1 billion a year.

Now, Russia is striking back. A Russian industry and product designer is asserting that the US has been abetting intellectual-property pirates to suit its own needs, by directing copies of Russian merchandise around the world. The complaint is not about software or music. It makes no mention of movies or video games. It is about the Kalashnikov assault rifle, the most prolific firearm ever made.

"We see a great number of products which are named after Kalashnikov, my name," said Mikhail T. Kalashnikov, the weapon's original designer. "They are buying Kalashnikovs from other countries," he added.

Since the collapse of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's army in Iraq, the US has been purchasing or arranging the transfer of thousands of knockoffs of Kalashnikovs, commonly referred to as AK-47s, to outfit new military and security forces in Kabul and Baghdad. These rifles have not been made in Russia. Instead, they have originated in weapons plants controlled by eastern European states, each of which was a partner of Moscow's in Soviet days.

So begins an argument at once curious, impassioned and bizarre, involving the legacy of Cold War influence, jockeying, secretive arms deals, recent efforts to defeat modern Islamic insurgencies and international business and patent law. The automatic Kalashnikov, made in a factory here, is in many ways Moscow's Ford. It is a quintessential national product: extraordinarily



A security guard with a Kalashnikov rifle

successful, widespread, a name closely connected to the identity of a state.

It was designed by Kalashnikov, a former Russian tank sergeant, in classified Soviet weapons trials shortly after World War II, and was promptly embraced by Soviet soldiers for its simplicity and reliability under almost any condition. It is regarded as a weapon that rarely, if ever, fails. Russian arms officials say no other nation has a valid licence to make the AK-47 and its many derivatives and clones, and Washington has been encouraging violations of intellectual property rights.

Officials say Russia is suffering losses in income and jobs, besides damage to the Kalashnikov name, and that the US must shop for the weapons directly from here. "We would like to inform everybody in the world that many countries, including the US, have violated recognised norms," said Igor Sevastyanov, who leads a division of Rosoboron export, Russia's state-controlled arms export company.

US officials confirm that non-Russian Kalashnikov rifles have been provided with American assistance to Afghanistan and Iraq. They say while sometimes the weapons have been transferred via purchases in international arms markets, other times through the solicitation of donations from friendly states as a gesture of cooperation with the Bush administration's war and reconstruction efforts. NYT News Service

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ROAD DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Sr.no.	Type of Bitumen	Tender Issuing office
1.	Carpeting/Re-carpeting of roads in various zones of SMC by drum mix type of ho	Concerned Zone Offices

INDIANOIL

MARKETING DIVISION HEAD OFFICE

SERVO

Corrigendum

TENDER NO. LM/PT-09/04

NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF 500ML LINER CARTON (ROLLAPACK & CEKA ETC.) AT MUMBAI & CHENNAI

Please refer to our earlier Advertisement for above-mentioned Tender in this publication on 07.07.2004

Please read Item 1- Structure details of Inner liner under

To scuttle a peace plan?

President's rule in Nagaland

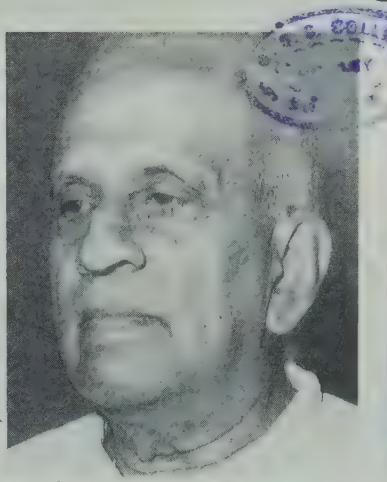
TAPAS RAY

FEW, except for the utterly gullible, would suspect the Congress(I) of democratic sentiments these days. Still, the party never ceases to amaze. With every passing day, the limits of its authoritarianism continue to be pushed farther and farther.

Tiny Nagaland happens to be the victim of its latest outrage. After toppling non-Congress(I) coalition Ministries in Meghalaya and Manipur, Phesao Vamuzo's Nagaland People's Council (NPC)-Congress (Regional) Government in Kohima had been in New Delhi's gunsight for time. Senior Congress(I) leaders, including Union Ministers, had been dashing in and out of the State in order to engineer defections. The plan was to topple the Government and keep the Assembly in suspended animation (as in Meghalaya and Manipur), so that the Congress(I) would have time to rope in enough MLAs to tot up a majority and then form a government (as it had managed to do in Meghalaya).

New Delhi's errand boys were quite successful in the first part of their job — that is, in engineering defections. But then, Chief Minister Vamuzo put up a splendid fight. Speaker Thenucho had at one stage disqualified a number of floor-crossers under the anti-defection law, with the effect that the Government continued to enjoy a majority. But there came a stage, especially after a recent visit by Union Minister of State for External Affairs Eduardo Faleiro, when the situation seemed to be going out of control. There were reports of a fresh spate of defections on the cards and among the names mentioned was that of Rural Development Minister C. Chonsen. Clearly, a mockery had been made of the people's verdict, recorded in the last elections in December 1989.

The only possible way to restore a government enjoying the people's mandate was to hold fresh elections. Vamuzo therefore recommended to Governor M. M. Thomas that the Assembly be dissolved. This was accepted and Thomas asked the Chief Minister to continue in a caretaker capacity.



Ajith Kumar

Governor M. M. Thomas... facing New Delhi's wrath.



Ousted Chief Minister Vamuzo... forced out.

Vamuzo promised fresh polls in six months' time.

Thus, for the moment at least, New Delhi's game seemed to have been checkmated. A fresh chapter seemed to be beginning in the State's politics. This was sorely needed, for Nagaland had been witnessing a drama of the most sordid kind ever since the 1989 polls. Initially, the Congress(I) had formed a government, having won 36 seats in a House of 60 — Vamuzo's NPC had won the remaining 24 seats.

Then, in May 1990, 12 Congressmen broke away to set up the Congress (Regional), which joined hands with the NPC to form a government under K. L. Chishi. Things were relatively quiet until December, when there was another spate of defections, this time from the NPC-Congress(R) camp. Vamuzo, who had become Chief Minister by then, dropped some Ministers in retaliation. Ten NPC legislators were disqualified by the Speaker for floor-crossing and so were five Congress(I) MLAs. Two NPC men were declared unattached. Thus, the strength of the House stood reduced to 45 and Vamuzo's Government was secure for the time being with a majority (24).

That was not the end of the story by any means and the Congress(I) was determined to grab power, as the comings and goings of people like Faleiro showed. By dissolving the Assembly, Thomas delayed what was perhaps inevitable, for a few days.

But then, Thomas' action earned him New Delhi's wrath. Over the years, the Centre has grown accustomed to using the Governor's office for partisan ends — basically to bring down inconvenient State Governments. Pliant, and even sycophantic, incumbents have obliged the Centre with reports to the effect that the constitutional machinery had broken down in the States concerned so that Article 356 of the Constitution could be used to dismiss the governments. Most of the time the Governors took this as their sole function, apart from cutting ribbons and lighting lamps. That is why Thomas' action came as a shock to New Delhi.

While Thomas had informed the Centre of the step he had taken, Congress(I) leaders said it was "unprecedented" that he had not "sought the President's advice", that is, acted upon the Centre's directive instead of using his own discretion. New Delhi's anger and frustration were natural.

But then, constitutional experts were in no doubt that, "unprecedented" or not, Thomas' action was in keeping with the Constitution — under Article 174(2)(b), he was under no obligation

India's perestroika – II

headed socially



combating endemic hunger and deprivation.

Given the economic track record, the guaranteed immediate scenario of stagflation and the real medium-term prospect of a "choking off" of the growth impulses in the country, the strategy of growth-mediated security does not seem open to India. Whatever policy-mix it pursues in specific areas, its strategy for combating endemic hunger as well as hunger as crisis must clearly be "support-led." That is, it must over a prolonged period incorporate in its development programme a nation-wide and society-wide public distribution system based on a considerable measure of subsidisation, a reliable system of public health care,a tremendously enhanced support to education, most importantly at the primary and middle levels, and so on. But what is unfolding before our eyes is the very opposite of this.

To promise to the masses of the poor that they will benefit from the "trickle down" in the new economic strategy is a joke in atrocious taste. The other inequitous aspects of Budget '92 aside, the reduced provisioning for the public distribution system (compared even with the revised estimates for 1991-92) and the serious cuts in government expenditure on the rural development and social sectors can only be characterised as *socially reactionary* in a dangerous sense. The implications for those who live below the poverty line in both rural and urban India — hard-working, upstanding people like the starving weavers of Andhra Pradesh whose crisis was spotlighted in the *Frontline* issue of December 6, 1991 — are appalling.

The dangers are great during a period of double-digit inflation and *perestroika*-led redistribution of wealth and income away from the poor as a matter of overt economic philosophy held down by the World Bank and the IMF. If the monsoon fails and a drought descends in the near term, the direct social implications of Budget '92 and the rest of the ensemble of new economic policies could be horrifying.

The prospect on the employment front is exceptionally grim. There are some 35 million job-seekers registered in the employment exchanges round the country and economist Bhabatosh Dutta estimates that the unrecorded unemployed (including those laid off by closed firms) may number 50 million or more — making a total of 85-90 million perhaps in early 1992. What is outrageous is that in this social situation, a minority government stands blithely committed to some kind of "exit policy" pressed relentlessly by the IMF, the World Bank and a variety of big investors, foreign and Indian.

In his report and recommendation on the $ 500 million structural adjustment loan for India, meant for his Executive Directors, the World Bank president made it clear that the Government of India had really no choice, or option, in the matter. Helpfully, he provided a pithy explanation for this view: "The Government recognises that the major restructuring of the Indian economy implied by its agenda of macroeconomic adjustment and structural reform will depend on the formulation of a *socially acceptable exit policy* to facilitate the closure or restructuring of sick and loss-making companies in both the private and public sectors. Development of an effective exit policy has been inhibited primarily by the concern to protect existing jobs, largely regardless of cost. The entire regulatory system as it evolved over the years has become highly inimical to exit: onerous procedures for liquidation under the Companies Act; restrictive regulations governing labour retrenchment and the strong bias in favour of preserving jobs evident in the attitudes of the judiciary and bureaucracy; practices in the financial sector; state and local governments' refusal to permit closure of plants; restrictions against transfers of land, and intrusion of political considerations."

Manmohan Singh's post-leak protestations notwithstanding, there was nothing subtle about the pressure, the expectation and the understanding. As though this explanation was not enough to satisfy the World Bank's Executive Board, the president added: "The Government recognises the necessity of major changes in the legal and regulatory framework as it affects exit, in order to ease the burden of industrial sickness and to enhance flexibility and dynamism in the industrial sector."

There is not a whiff here of any concern for the unemployed and the underemployed or for those workers in the organised sector who are going to be thrown out of work in the near future. Under these circumstances, it will be next to impossible for Narasimha Rao to claim that on the issue of an exit policy, his government will turn down World Bank wisdom.

One has only to turn to the concluding section of the 1991 election manifesto of the Congress(I) to catch a glimpse of the gigantic political fraud that is being enacted today:

★ we pledge to "arrest (the price rise in essential commodities and, in particular, roll back prices to levels obtaining in July 1990" in 13 specified cases (within a time frame of 100 days).

★ we pledge to "generate 10 million new jobs every year" (a specific promise for the first 365 days) "adding up to 100 million new jobs before the year 2000"

★ we pledge to "introduce comprehensive crop and cattle insur[illegible] schemes" (within 730 days)

★ we pledge to "establish the National Mid-day Meal programme [illegible] "revamp and strengthen the [illegible] Distribution System all over the country to make foodgrains and other items available at reasonable prices" (both within 1,000 days).

Narasimha Rao, the chairman of the manifesto drafting committee, must be made to explain what was the process of Enlightenment that shifted his party's sights so suddenly, within months, to a point where these specific promises relating to inflation, employment, a measure of security for the small and medium farmer, and a massively subsidised anti-hunger programme for the needy and the hard-pressed appear as a joke in cruel taste — which can be laughed out of court by Manmohan Singh and that part of India which is currently ecstatic about what he is doing to the economy. ■

Taking stock of

Where it is

N. RAM

DEFENDING his Government's programme of economic *perestroika* in Parliament recently, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao offered two interesting insights. "The vast majority of the country," he boasted, stood behind his economic *perestroika* "like a rock." Secondly, he made what he and the faithful evidently mistook for a clever debating point. The food subsidy, for which Budget '92 provided Rs. 2,750 in all, would continue for a long time — although the World Bank had suggested that India should do away with subsidies "lock, stock and barrel."

The first statement is very much in line with the soft-spoken belligerence and 'new demonology' projected by Finance Minister Manmohan Singh in his budget presentation. That performance (according to the constitutional lawyer Upendra Baxi's colourful analysis of this 'discourse' and vocabulary) attempted to send the message far and wide that "the no-changers are personifications of assassins: the pro-changers are the heroic figures ready to sacrifice themselves at the altar of change... critics become assassins of a new order; criticism becomes a bloodied genre; discussions and debate become a mortal combat." This stance — significant because it is borne on the wings of contentious and far-going actions of exceptional socio-economic and ideological cynicism — reflects a new mood of intolerance in relation to democratic dissent, criticism, opposition and resistance.

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's second statement, recorded in the Rajya Sabha, is breathtaking in its social implications. Given the magnitude, depth and intractability of mass poverty in India, it is like taking human rights credit for rejecting, for the conceivable future, a prescription of genocide.

Before he proceeds any further, at least on the fragile food front, Narasimha Rao should pause and read a highly educative book on the subject, "Hunger and Public Action" by Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989). The empirical and theoretical material it offers, and the issues it addresses, are of direct relevance to the problem of food security that India faces — and could become terribly vulnerable to — for all the complacency that reigns in New Delhi.

Interestingly, Sen and Dreze acknowledge that their argument for public action as the most effective way of combating hunger might be a case of swimming "against the current" in a world that has recently "moved decisively towards unhesitating admiration of private enterprise and towards eulogising and advocating reliance on the market mechanism." While seeing "some sense" in the contentions put forward on the other side, they expose "a good deal of nonsense mixed with that sense." Their book highlights the enormously positive role of public action, including state intervention, in the success stories of the modern developing world. It brings to the fore "the outstanding and decisive contribution" made by constructive public action (including the role of an independent press) in eradicating famines and also in eliminating endemic undernutrition and deprivation. This is the empirical and theoretical experience that Indian policy-makers must pay special attention to.

Looking at the empirical experience, and specifically at the experience of the ten best developing economy performers, with respect to lowering the "Under-5 Mortality Rate" (U5MR) over a 25 year period, 1960-85, Sen and Dreze identify "two contrasting approaches to the removal of precarious living conditions" — that is two alternative strategies.

One approach they term "growth-mediated security": promoting economic growth and taking the best possible advantage of the potentialities released by greater general affluence, including not only an expansion of private incomes, but also an improved basis for public support. In socio-economic and moral terms, the experience of growth-mediated security stands in contraposition to the strategy of "unaimed opulence" — which they characterise as "a roundabout, undependable, and wasteful way of improving the living standards of the poor" (most notoriously seen in the case of Brazil, as an excellent paper by Jaerson Lucas Bezerra to be presented at a forthcoming conference in New Delhi on the Debt crisis, Globalisation and Social Justice makes clear).

Of the ten best performers, five — South Korea, Singapore, China's Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait — belong to this category of growth-mediated security. Interestingly, the first three happened to be among the five fastest-growing economies in the world during the period under consideration.

But it is the alternative strategy of "support-led security" that should be of practical interest to India and Narasimha Rao. Sen and Dreze describe this as the strategy of direct resort to "wide-ranging public support in domains such as employment provision, income distribution, health care, education and social assistance to remove destitution without waiting for a transformation in the level of general affluence." India's track record in these areas has been quite notorious even after taking credit for certain achievements such as the prevention of famine after Independence and the avoidance of large-scale foodgrain imports in the recent period.

Of the ten best performers studied by Sen and Dreze, five are those which have benefited, indisputably, from following a strategy of support-led security. Their growth rates have been relatively low, but they have had outstanding success in reducing Under-5 Mortality to a very low level in comparison with most other countries at a comparable income level. The prominent role of active public involvement in various forms of social support, including the direct provision of vital commodities and social services, is well established for these five cases. They are Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, China and Jamaica. Sri Lanka is another success story and in India Kerala represents, way and ahead, the brightest spot. In particular, China, Sri Lanka and the State of Kerala provide important lessons for future policy-making in India — which has had an exceptionally poor record in

schizoid policy

Tamils and India

quite impressed by the planning and professionalism that have gone into this Sri Lankan Army campaign in the North. It has pressed on, switching tracks to keep the Tigers militarily unsettled and politically insecure. The Army has steadily expanded its dominion of control and influence in the Tamil North, thus far studiously avoiding anything that might smack of adventurism.

The key question is: what is the political game plan that backs these operations? There are indications that the public mood in the Sri Lankan South is anything but hawkish. If the political objective of the 1991-92 military campaign was to force Prabakaran's organisation to the negotiating table on weakened or chastened terms — or else to take further punishment and humiliation — enough opportunity and time were given for the first option. Concretely, the detailed autonomy proposals submitted by S. Thondaman, senior Minister and leader of the Ceylon Workers Congress, have gone considerably further than the package offered to the Tamils in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987, which collapsed within two years and left behind a social and political mess.

The point is that although Sinhala chauvinism, instigated by a leading section of the Buddhist clergy, has come out pre-emptively against offering the Tamils anything along these lines, Prabakaran & Co. have not shown any sign of making concessions away from the extremist and totally unrealisable goal of *Eelam*. They have refused to concede an inch on the idea of establishing the "sovereignty" of the "Tamil nation" through asserting the "right to self-determination" and have hinted that they might settle for nothing less than a loose arrangement between "two sovereign nations." Arrogantly, they have maintained through a period of military decline the posture that the choice of war or peace is entirely the enemy's.

There have been some initiatives, by moderate and well-intentioned groups and individuals over the years, to narrow the gap and find a solution to Sri Lanka's apparently intractable ethnic conflict. What is clear now is that the critical fallacy in the efforts has been to mix up the political interests of the hard-pressed Sri Lankan Tamils with the actions and positions of the LTTE. If a durable solution is to be found, the interests of the Sri Lankan Tamils must be disentangled or delinked, conceptually and politically, from the interests articulated in word and deed by the Tigers.

The mass of Sri Lankan Tamils have been victims of a vicious ethnic conflict; in this the LTTE bears, for the post-1983 period, a hefty share of the responsibility for the horrors. Democratic India must continue to show sympathy for the innocent civilian victims — Tamil, Sinhala and Muslim — of the ethnic conflict, but this can have nothing to do with the idea of "rebuilding" any kind of "political relationship" with the LTTE. Tragically, after the liquidation, by the LTTE, of the Amirthalingams along with the leaders of the rival militant groups, the Sri Lankan Tamils have appeared to have no one of credibility to speak up for them — other than the Pol Potist Tigers headed by a man who stands deeply implicated in the assassination of a former Indian Prime Minister.

Today, it is clear that whether it is war or peace, India's leverage over Sri Lanka's ethnic question is a thing of the past. This is essentially because honest and self-critical political opinion recognises the old policy as schizoid and deeply flawed in the following sense.

On the one hand, the basic political objective of India's post-1983 Sri Lanka policy was to help carve out security and justice for the Tamils within the unity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, even as it ruled out any political truck with the secessionist and extremist demand for *Eelam* (which, unfortunately, was also backed by the political moderates), the policy initiated by Indira Gandhi and M. G. Ramachandran and inherited by Rajiv Gandhi sought to build up the armed militants, including the LTTE, militarily. That was *realpolitik*. At its best, it was democratic India's way of putting pressure on the political negotiating process. Today, the unstated political consensus in India is that this deeply contradictory, schizoid policy proved disastrously counterproductive for the people of both countries.

Two interesting books came out recently on a highly sensitive aspect of this fiasco. One was "Assignment Jaffna" by Lt. Gen. (retd.) S. C. Sardeshpande; the other was "The IPKF in Sri Lanka" by Lt. Gen. (retd.) Depinder Singh, Army Commander and Overall IPKF Commander during a critical phase in the Sri Lankan operations. Whatever be the nuances of professional military opinion on the assessments presented in these two books, it is time that India learned political lessons from the costly experience.

As for the LTTE, no one should entertain any further illusions about its character. It has been given many political chances and proved itself to be a militarist and terrorist organisation with zero regard for human life (Sinhalese, Muslim and Tamil), for civil society and for democratic values and with a penchant for making irreversibly disastrous miscalculations.

The last three major acts of miscalculation have been

* the decision to break the opportunistic peace and entente with President R. Premadasa in June 1990, after the LTTE had gained from this bizarre relationship time, money, weapons and deadly communication capabilities, and an unbelievable opportunity to replenish its hardware and manpower severely depleted by the hostilities with the IPKF
* the cold-blooded, meticulously planned assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in Sriperumbudur on May 21, 1991
* the costly misadventure, from a military and morale standpoint, of the Battle of the Elephant Pass Camp, which began a new chapter in which the Sri Lankan armed forces have seemed to go from strength to strength.

But from all this, no one should jump to the conclusion that the Sri Lankan military campaign is going to be successfully concluded. Indeed the latest developments suggest the scenario that some experts have spoken about: history is about to re-enact itself, with an army apparently poised to enter Jaffna and the armed extremists, bruised and weakened, poised to melt away into the jungles to wage a new round of grinding and totally useless warfare in the guerilla mode. From India, there is bound to be a deafening silence, especially if the civilian casualties are kept to a minimum. ■

'Water warrior' brings laurels to Kakol

By Gangadhar Hugar

Haveri, July 26: An innovative approach for recharging ground water through old and dried up open wells in Kakol village, has turned out to be even more commendable for it has brought the 'Kannada Prabha-GETIT Man of the year 2005' prestigious award to Chenabasappa Shivappa Kombali, a progressive farmer of Kakol village, of Ranebennur taluk in Haveri district, 24 km from here.

In 1980, over exploitation of ground water led to the drying up of the 165 open wells at Kakol. The villagers then drilled around 500 to 600 borewells that went dry too.

Then, Kombali came up with the idea of 'reviving' these open wells through recharging ground water. He visited many projects undertaken by various NGOs. He had first seen farm ponds constructed by the World Bank-aided Sujala Water Project and was conversant with the concepts of water shed management. He was convinced that recharging the open wells in the village was the most cost-effective way to solve the problem faced by the villagers.

In February 2003, Kombali decided to set an example for the villagers by making a pond on his 10 acre farm land, in the upper catchment area that collected the rain water flowing down the hills through the feeder canals and let the excess water flow into a chain of open wells, filling them one by one.

He made the best use of this opportunity and put 22 open wells covered for recharge under this scheme. Diversion channels were made to harvest excess water, which was in turn, were directed to the open wells.

When one well filled up, the excess water went to the next well through the diversion channel. Two to three open wells were linked vertically to harvest excess water which otherwise flowed into the drainage line. Field trenches cum bunds were made where required, which also functioned as diversion channels other than controlling soil erosion.

On an average, each open well receives water from 15 to 20 acres of land.

With the first showers in May 2004, the result was almost a miracle. The lake and the farm pond filled the open wells.

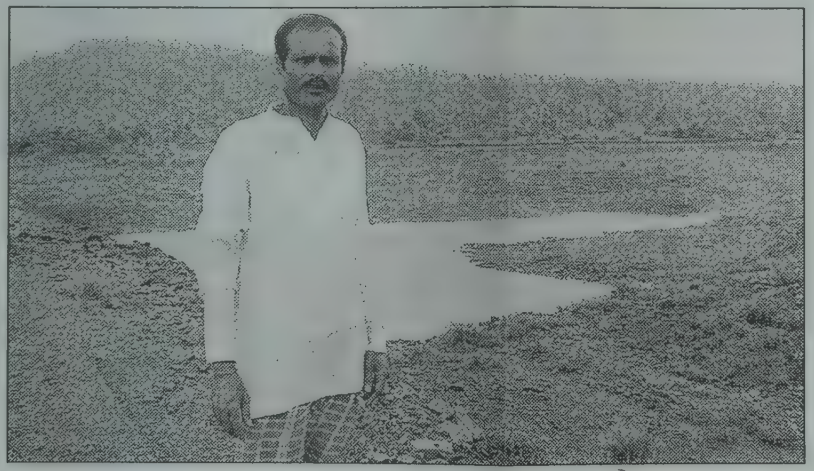
Cattle were able to drink from the lake and the arid lands turned lush green.

Kombali's work was slowly recognised by the villagers. Farmers of the village along with the youth, have joined hands with him for water conservation, rain water harvesting and forestation.

Dr S M Hiremath, horticulturist, Krishi Vignana Kendra Hanumanmatti, speaking with this paper here on Tuesday, said people proudly term Kombali - a water warrior (Jala Yodha).

Karabasangouda Patil, a farmer, said they were very proud of their village youth's efforts. The villagers had also taken an oath to conserve water.

▶See P5



'Water warrior' Kombali standing near the pond developed by him
— Express photo

CM to confer award on Kombali today

Haveri: Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy will confer the prestigious Kannada Prabha-GETIT Man of the year 2005 award on Chenabasappa Shivappa Kombali, a model farmer of Kakol village of Ranebennur taluk in Haveri district on Thursday.

B S Yediyurappa, deputy Chief Minister, Dharam Singh, Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly, C M Udashi, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj and District Minister, Beerappa Adinavar, president, gram panchayat, Nehru Olekar, MLA Byadgi, Raghavendra Shastri, vice-president, GETIT Infomedia Limited, Sri Padre, environmentalist, Manoj Kumar Sonthalia, Chairman and Managing Director, Express Publications (Madurai) Limited and T J S George, advisor, Editorial Board, EPM Ltd, will be the guests of honour•ENS

His dream comes true

Haveri: Speaking to this reporter at Goravana Gudda, near Kakol village here on Tuesday, Kombali said he was happy that rain water could be stored in 2,500 acres of catchment area in and around Kakol village. He said when he started rain water harvesting, a few people taunted him but he concentrated on his work that yielded good results and his dream came true.

Kombali said he was guided and encouraged by Dr S A Patil, Vice Chancellor, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, and Dr S M Hiremath, horticulturist and the staff of Krishi Vignana Kendra Hanumanmatti in Ranebennur taluk.

He urged the State Government to establish the Water and Soil Conservation Exposing Centre in Krishi Vignana Kendra Hanumanmatti to help farmers of the state.

Parvatavva, the 78-year-old mother of Chenabasappa Kombali, was extremely proud of her son for his noble deed toward the progress of his native Kakol.

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o dilution of uke deal: PM

July 26: In a categonce, Prime Minister Singh on Wednendia will make no with provisions of joint statement of ear, amid concerns aspects of the proican law to endorse uclear deal.

assure the House never compromise, which is inconsistprovisions of the ent of July 18," he Sabha while interring the question

e Minister's assurabout 10 days after th US President Geo- India's concerns rertain aspects of the which is currently S Congress.

the House that his has been making sure "utmost transth a view to promotall accountability" to the deal reached im and Bush in year on the basis of



The govt is ready for a debate on the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal

the deal more than once, he said the government was ready for a debate on the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal and he was willing to make a suo moto statement on the issue.

The Prime Minister's response came after deputy leader of the BJP V.K. Malhotra sought a debate on the nuclear issue to which Speaker Somnath Chatterjee said he had no objection.

Earlier, replying to a volley of questions from members of Left parties, Samajwadi party and BJP, Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma said the deal related to only civilian nuclear cooperation and that

On members' apprehensions over certain conditions mentioned in the two Bills to be voted by the US House of Representatives and the Senate, Sharma said these were premature as "there is no final legislation."

Pointing out that the nuclear deal was based on reciprocity, he said nothing that is not within the templates defined in the July 18, 2005 joint statement will be accepted.

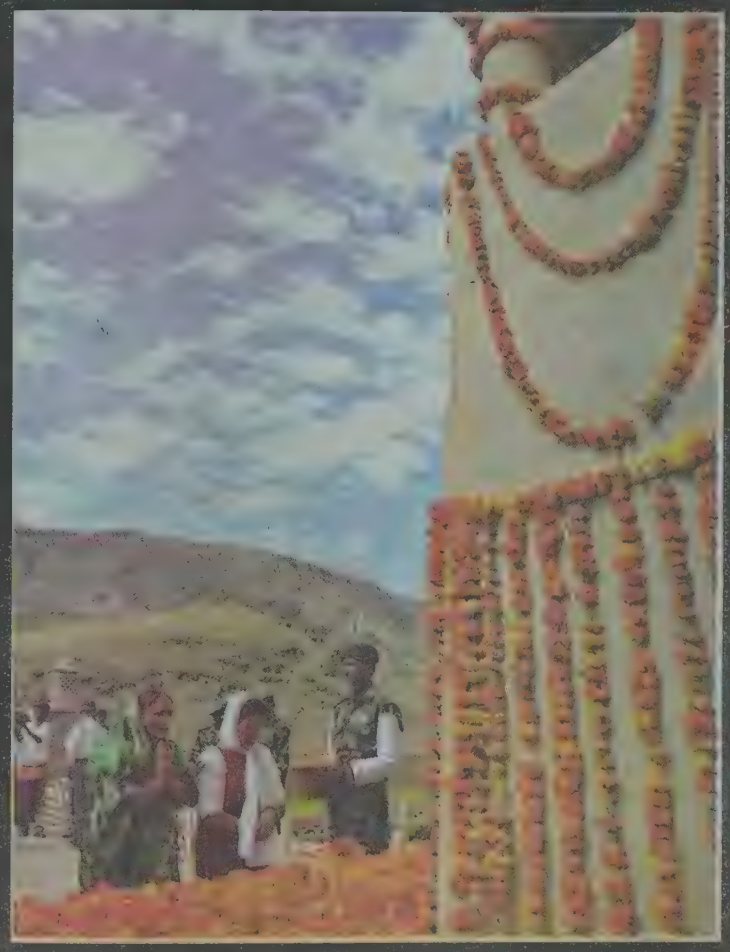
"There is no deviation from assurances given by the Prime Minister in July last year and March this year to Parliament," the Minister said.

"Our position remains the same," he said adding "no fresh obligations" or "new conditions will be accepted by India."

Observing that the deal was based on reciprocity by the two sides, Sharma said India has finalised separation plan on its nuclear facilities and the US is required to adjust its laws and policies.

"Washington is also required to work with its friends and allies to adjust international re-

HOMAGE TO MARTYRS



Relatives of soldiers killed in Kargil war, pray in front the war memorial during 'Vijay Diwas' celebrations in Drass, east of [illegible] 'Vijay Diwas' is commemorated

ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಹೋರಾಟ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಅವಶ್ಯವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ

ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ಜನಪರ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳ ಆಶಯಗಳು ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಚಳವಳಿ ಆವಿಷ್ಕಾರ ಮಾಡಿದ ಆಶಯಗಳಲ್ಲ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಜನಪರ ಚಳವಳಿಗಳ ಆಶಯಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ನಾವು ನಕ್ಸಲ್‌ವಾದವನ್ನು ಸಮರ್ಥಿಸುವ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ರೈತ ಹಾಗೂ ದಲಿತ ಚಳವಳಿಗೆ ಹಿಂಸೆ ಎಂದೂ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ ಆಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಪ್ರಸ್ತುತವಾದ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಚಳವಳಿಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಜನಪರ ಚಳವಳಿಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ರೈತ, ದಲಿತ ಚಳವಳಿಗಳು ಜಾಗತೀಕರಣದ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ನಾವು ನಡೆಸಬೇಕಾದ ಹೋರಾಟಕ್ಕೆ ಸನ್ನದ್ಧವಾಗಬಲ್ಲ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿವೆ. ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಯುವ ಮನಸ್ಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಹದಗೊಳಿಸೋಣ

ರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಚೆನ್ನಿ

ಆತ್ಮವಿಮರ್ಶೆಯನ್ನು ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳು ತಾವು ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವ ಚಿಂತನಾ ಕ್ರಮ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಹಬಾಳಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ತಾವೇ ಅನುಸರಿಸುವ ದುರಂತ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರವನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳು ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ಸಾಯಕರನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸುವುದು. ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವವ ಶತ್ರುಗಳನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವ ನಾಯಕರು ತಮ್ಮ ಸಂಗಾತಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಜಾಪ್ರಭುತ್ವವಾದಿಯಾಗಿ ನಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಅಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುವುದು. ಫ್ಯಾಸಿಸ್ಟ್ ಧೋರಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಧೋರಣೆಯ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಉಗ್ರವಾದ ಫ್ಯಾಸಿಸ್ಟ್ ಧೋರಣೆಯನ್ನು ತಾಳುವುದು- ಇವೆಲ್ಲ ದುರಂತಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವು ನೋಡುತ್ತಲೇ ಬಂದಿದ್ದೇವೆ.

ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಎರಡು ಬಗೆಯ ವಾದಗಳು ಪ್ರಚಲಿತವಾಗಿವೆ. ಒಂದು- ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯೊಂದು ಜ್ವಲಂತವಾಗಿರುವಾಗ ಇಂಥಾ ಅತಿ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಣೆಗಳಿಗೆ ವ್ಯವಧಾನವೆಲ್ಲಿದೆ? ಅಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಿ ಶತ್ರು ದಾಳಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಮೊದಲು ಅವನನ್ನು ಬಗ್ಗು ಬಡಿಯೋಣ. 'ಆಮೇಲೆ ಆತ್ಮವಿಮರ್ಶೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳೋಣ- ಎನ್ನುವ ವಾದವಾಗಿದೆ. ಎರಡನೆಯದು 'ಎಂಡ್ ಅಂಡ್ ಮೀನ್ಸ್' ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಈಗ ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ಆದರ್ಶಮಯವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುವ ವಾದ. ಈ ವಾದದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಗುರಿಯನ್ನು ಸಾಧಿಸುವ ಧಾವಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಆದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ನಾವು ಬಳಸುವ ಕ್ರಮಗಳ ಶುಚಿತ್ವ, ನ್ಯಾಯ ಬದ್ಧತೆ, ಮಾನವ ಪರತೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಎಚ್ಚರವಾಗಿರಲೇಬೇಕು. ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ಗುರಿ ಸಾಧಿಸಿದರೂ ಕೂಡ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ತದ್ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾದ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವೇ ಬೆಳೆಸಿದಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅವು ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವಾಗಿಯೇ ಹೊಸ ಬಗೆಯ ಅನ್ಯಾಯಗಳ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಾಕುತ್ತವೆ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಮೊದಲನೆ ವಾದದ ಆಧಾರವಾಗಿರುವ 'ಆಮೇಲೆ' ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಬರುವುದೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅದು ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ 'ಆಮೇಲೆ'ಯಾಗಿಯೇ ಉಳಿಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ನನ್ನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಎರಡನೇ ವಾದದ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಿದೆ. ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರಣವೆಂದರೆ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆಸುವವರು ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ಬಹುಪಾಲು ಸ್ವಂತ ನಿರ್ಧಾರಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲಾಗದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ದುರ್ಬಲರನ್ನು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದಲೇ ಆತ್ಮವಿಮರ್ಶೆಯನ್ನುವುದು ಕೇವಲ ನೈತಿಕ ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸೆಯ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯಲ್ಲ: ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ತಕ್ಷಣ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಮಾಡುವ ಒಂದು ಮಗ್ಗಲೂ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಜಿ.ಕೆ. ಗೋವಿಂದ ರಾವ್, ಪಿ.ಎಸ್. ಶ್ರೀಧರ್, ಗೌರಿ ಲಂಕೇಶ್ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರರು 'ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ'ಯ ವಾಚಕರ ವಾಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಚರ್ಚೆಯ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ.

ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯ ಶುರುವಾದ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಬದ್ಧತೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪಾಲುಗೊಂಡ ನನಗೆ ಅನೇಕ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳು ಬಾಧಿಸಿವೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ಇತಿಹಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯು ಕೋಮುವಾದದ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ನಡೆಸಿದ ಚಳುವಳಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಮಹತ್ವಪೂರ್ಣ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ, ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಚಳುವಳಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಅದರ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲತೆ, ಸದಸ್ಯ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯ, ಅದು ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಾಕಿದ ಚರ್ಚೆಗಳು, ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸಿದ ಕಥನಗಳು ಅಪೂರ್ವವಾಗಿವೆ. ಅಂತೆಯೇ ಅದು ಕನ್ನಡದ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ಮನಸ್ಸುಗಳಿಗೆ ತಂದುಕೊಟ್ಟ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಕ್ರಮಗಳ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಯ ಅರಿವೂ ಕೂಡ. ಇವುಗಳನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಗಳೆಯುವವರು ಮೂರ್ಖರಾಗಲು ಪ್ರಯಾಸಪಡುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳು ಮಾತ್ರ. ಆದರೆ ಈವರೆಗೂ ಈ ವೇದಿಕೆ ತನ್ನ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮವಾಗಿ, ವಿಮರ್ಶಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿ ಚಿಂತಿಸಿಯೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ನಮ್ಮ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಶತ್ರುವಾದ ಕೋಮುವಾದ, ಫ್ಯಾಸಿಸಂಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಲು ಇರುವ ಏಕಮಾತ್ರ ಸಂಘಟನೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಇಂಥ ಸ್ವ-ವಿಮರ್ಶೆಯ ವ್ಯವಧಾನ ಅನವಶ್ಯಕವೆಂದು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಭಾವಿಸಿದಂತಿದೆ.

ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ನನ್ನ ಅನುಭವವನ್ನೇ ಆಧಾರವಾಗಿ ಇಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಕ್ಷರಶಃ ನೂರಾರು ಸಂಘ- ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಪಾಲುಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ನಿಜವಾದರೂ ಅದನ್ನು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ನಿಯಂತ್ರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಒಂದು ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಗುಂಪು. ಇದು ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲರಾದ, ಸಮರ್ಥ ಎಡೆಗಾರಿಕೆಯುಳ್ಳವರ ಗುಂಪು. ಪೂರ್ವ ನಿರ್ಧಾರಿತವಾದ ಅಜೆಂಡಾವೊಂದನ್ನು ಮಂಡಿಸಿ ಒಪ್ಪಿಸುವ ಗುಂಪು. ಆದರೆ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದವನ್ನು ಯಾವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೂ ವಿರೋಧಿಸಲು ಸಿದ್ಧರಿಲ್ಲದೇ ಇರುವವರ ಗುಂಪು. ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಪರ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿರೋಧದ ಮಧ್ಯದ ಒಂದು 'ಸ್ಪೇಸ್' ಇದೆಯೆಂದು ಪಾಪಿಸುತ್ತ ನಕ್ಸಲೀಯ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸಮಾಜದ ಹಲವಾರು ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾದ ಜನಪರ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳು ದುರ್ಬಲಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಒಂದು ಮಾತನ್ನೂ ಹೇಳಲು ಸಿದ್ಧರಿಲ್ಲದವರ ಗುಂಪು. ನಕ್ಸಲೀಯ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳ ಸಾಫನೆ ಶೂನ್ಯವೆಂದು ಒಪ್ಪಲು ಸಿದ್ಧರಿಲ್ಲದವರ ಗುಂಪು. ಈ ಗುಂಪಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಜನಸಮುದಾಯಗಳ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಜೀವಂತ ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳಿಲ್ಲ. ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗಿಯಾಗಿರುವ ಇತರ ಜನಪರ ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳ, ಬರಹಗಾರರ, ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಬೆಂಬಲವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ತಾನೇ ಸ್ವಂತವಾಗಿ ಒಂದು ಸಣ್ಣ ಚಳುವಳಿಯನ್ನೂ ಸಂಘಟಿಸುವ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲದ ಈ ಗುಂಪು ವೇದಿಕೆಯ ಕಾರ್ಯ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಿಯಂತ್ರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ನನಗೆ ಅನುಮಾನವಿಲ್ಲ. ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ, ನಕ್ಸಲ್‌ವಾದಿಗಳ ಹಿಂಸೆಯ ಚರ್ಚೆ ಬಂದ ಕೂಡಲೆ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಆಶಯಗಳು ಮುಖ್ಯವಲ್ಲವೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಇದರ ವಾದ.

ಇವರ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಎನ್ನುವ 'ಆಶಯಗಳು' ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಚಳುವಳಿಯ ಆಶಯಗಳಲ್ಲ. ಅವು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ, ಭಾರತದ ರೈತ, ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕ, ದಲಿತ, ಪರಿಸರವಾದಿ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳ ಆಶಯಗಳು. ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳು ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡು ತಮ್ಮ ಮಾನವ ಪರ ಆಶಯಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತಾರಗೊಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿವೆ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳಾದ ದಲಿತ ಚಳುವಳಿ ಹಾಗೂ ರೈತ ಚಳುವಳಿಗೆ ಹಿಂಸೆ ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಕಂಡೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಆ ಚಳುವಳಿಯ ಹೋರಾಟಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಯೂನಿಫಾರ್ಮ್ ಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಲೆದಾಡುವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯತೆ ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿಲ್ಲ.

ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದದ ಪರ ಅಥವಾ ವಿರೋಧದ ಮಧ್ಯದ ಕಾಲ್ಪನಿಕ 'ಸ್ಪೇಸ್' ನ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ಚಳುವಳಿಗೆ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತನಾಡುವ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯೆ ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದರೆ ಆ ವಾದದ ಅಪ್ರಸ್ತುತತೆ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನಮ್ಮ ನಾಡಿನ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ವಲಯದಲ್ಲೇ ನಡೆದಿರುವ, ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ಮಹಾನ್ ಜನಪರ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳ ಆಶಯಗಳು ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಚಳುವಳಿ ಆವಿಷ್ಕಾರ ಮಾಡಿದ ಆಶಯಗಳಲ್ಲ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಆ ಆಶಯಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದದ ಸಮರ್ಥನೆ ಅವಶ್ಯಕವಲ್ಲ. ಅಪ್ರಸ್ತುತವಾದ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದದಿಂದಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಜೀವಂತ ಜನಪರ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳ ಬಗೆಗೆ ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹೀಗೆಂದ ಮಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ದಲಿತ ಹಾಗೂ ರೈತ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳು ಸಮಾಪ್ತಕವಾಗಿವೆಯೆಂದಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಅವುಗಳ ಭಿನ್ನಮತಗಳು, ವ್ಯಂದ್ವಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಸೋಲುಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಚರ್ಚೆ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕವಾಗಿ ನಡೆದಿವೆ. ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ನಿಯಂತ್ರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಗುಂಪು ಇಂಥ ಚರ್ಚೆಗೆ ನೆಪ್ಪು ಹೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತಲೇ ಇದೆ. ಅದರೆ ಮಾನಸಿಕವಾಗಿ ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ.

ಗೋವಿಂದರಾಜ್ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ತನಗಿಂತ ಭಿನ್ನವಾಗಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವ ಯಾರನ್ನೂ ಅವಸರಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದೇ ಕೋಮು ಸೌಹಾರ್ದ ವೇದಿಕೆಯ ಏಕೀಕರಣ ವೇದಿಕೆಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ನಿರ್ಭಯವಾಗಿ ಕೋಮುವಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕಟುವಾಗಿ ಟೀಕಿಸಿದ ಗೋವಿಂದರಾಜ್. ರಾಮದಾಸ್ ಇವರ ನೆನಪುಗಳು ಕೂಡ ಬೇಡ; ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಅವರು ನಕ್ಸಲ್‌ವಾದದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತೃತೀಯ 'ಸ್ಪೇಸ್' ಇದೆಯೆಂದು ಒಪ್ಪಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಯಾವುದೇ ಬಗೆಯ ಹಿಂಸೆಯನ್ನು ಕೇವಲ ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವುದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಾಧ್ಯ. ಅದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಪರ-ವಿರೋಧವಿಲ್ಲದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಸಲುಪಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಒಪ್ಪದೇ ಇರುವವರು 'ಸೈದ್ಧಾಂತಿಕ ಮೂರ್ಖ'ರಲ್ಲ. ಗಾಂಧೀಜಿಯವರು ಹಿಂಸೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತಾಳಿದ ನಿಲುವು ಅಸಮಂಜಸವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಅರೆಬರೆಯೂ ಅಲ್ಲ.

ನಮ್ಮ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಜೊತೆಯಿದ್ದ ಅಮೃತ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲ ಹುಡುಗ, ಹುಡುಗಿಯರು ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮರೆಯಾದರೆ ಅವರು ಹುತಾತ್ಮರಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆಂದು ಸೈದ್ಧಾಂತಿಕವಾಗಿ ಸಿರುಮ್ಮೆಳವಾಗಿರುವವರು ಮನುಷ್ಯರೇ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಅವರು ನಾವು ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಎಂದು ಬದುಕಿರುವವರೆಗೆ ದುಃಖಿಸದವರು ಮನುಷ್ಯರಲ್ಲ. ಅವರನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಎಳೆದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ ವಾದಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಥನೆ ಇದೆಯೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತ (ತಾವು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗದೆ) ನಿರಾಳವಾಗಿರುವುದನ್ನು ನಾನಂತೂ ಒಪ್ಪಲಾರೆ. ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಕ್ಕೆ ಬಲಿಯಾವ ಹುಡುಗರು. ಅವಾವುಮೂ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಪೋಲೀಸರು ಕೋಮಿಯನ್ನು ಹಾರಿಸಿದರೆ ಹೊರಡುವ ಗುಂಡಿಗೆ ಪರ-ವಿರೋಧವಲ್ಲದ ತೃತೀಯ 'ಸ್ಪೇಸ್' ಸಿಕ್ಕುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದು ಯಾವುದೋ ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಜೀವಿಯ ತಲೆ ಅಥವಾ ಎದೆಗೆ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ತಾಕುತ್ತವೆ.

ಆದರಿಂದಲೇ ನಾವು ಹೇಳಲೇಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ. ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ವಾದ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಅವಶ್ಯಕವೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಈ ನೆಲದ ಬಹು ದೊಡ್ಡ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳಾದ ರೈತ, ದಲಿತ ಚಳುವಳಿಗಳು, ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಹೋರಾಟಗಳು ಜಾಗತೀಕರಣದ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ನಾವು ನಡೆಸಬೇಕಾದ ಮಹಾ ಹೋರಾಟಕ್ಕೆ ಸನ್ನದ್ಧವಾಗಬಲ್ಲ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿವೆ. ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಯುವ ಮನಸ್ಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಹದಗೊಳಿಸೋಣ. ಆಗಲೂ ಸರಕಾರ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಬಹು ದೊಡ್ಡ ನಕ್ಸಲ್ ಪಟ್ಟಿ ತಯಾರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಪರವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲ ಹೆಸರು ಮೋಹನದಾಸ್ ಕರಮಚಂದ ಗಾಂಧಿಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ■

(ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ) 30-6-02

Short takes

BELGAUM



MLA Abhay Patil and Horticulture Minister Shashikant Nayak gave roses to two-wheeler riders at Rani Chennamma Circle as part of the helmet wearing awareness campaign by the Belgaum police, in Belgaum on Thursday

— Express photo

Support helmet campaign

Bagewadi MLA Abhay Patil and Hukkeri MLA and Horticulture Minister Shashikant Nayak have asked two-wheeler riders to wear helmets while riding vehicles. As part of the helmet wearing campaign organised by the district police, the two politicians gave roses to the two-wheeler riders at Rani Chennamma Circle and asked them to wear helmets from August 1, when wearing helmets becomes compulsory. The Belgaum police had started a 15-day helmet awareness campaign in the city last week.

Bone health checkup camps

The Karnataka Health Institute, Ghataprabha and Vijaya Hospital, Belgaum, will organise free bone health checkup camps at Ghataprabha and Vijaya hospital, Belgaum, on July 29 and 30, respectively. The camp at Vijaya hospital will be held between 8 am and 11 am and at Ghataprabha between 10 am and 4 pm. Dr Ravi B Patil, Dr Prakash Patil and Dr Rajeshwari B Patil will examine the patients in Be-

World Kannada Meet in Dec

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

"The government has released Rs 10 crore for conducting the meet"

Belgaum, July 27: The World Kannada Meet scheduled in Belgaum would be held in the last week of December.

Announcing this to reporters here on Thursday, I M Vithalmurthy, secretary, Department of Kannada and Culture, said that at present the government had released Rs 10 crore for conducting the meet. He said the money was not a problem for the meet.

He said that the government had decided to constrct Suvarna Samskritika Samuchayas (cultural complxes) to mark the golden jubilee of the formation of Karnataka.

He said each samuchaya would cost Rs 1.50 crore.

Belgaum, Gulbarga, Dharwad, Udupi, Bangalore, Shimoga and Mysore would get cultural complexes. "Each complx consists of a museum, art gallery, library and a small meeting hall," he added.

He said that the Deputy Commissioner Shalini Rajneesh had asked him to construct a museum to mark the World Kannada Meet in Belgaum.

He said, "If the land is identified the department will take up the construction of the building and will complete it before the World Kannada Meet starts in Belgaum."

He said the government was expecting a lakh people for the meet. A High Power Committee meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Kumaraswamy hade been convened in Bangalore on August 4 to discuss about the meet, he added.

The government had decided to bring out 110 books to mark the meet. The Kannada University of Hampi had come forward to publish 43 books written by eminent writers on the occasion, he added.

He said the department has decided to reprint some old books which were not av



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Award to be used for village development: Kombali

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Davanagere, July 27: The 'KP Man of the Year Award' which comprises a cash award of Rs 1 lakh would be used for the total development of Kakolu village, said recipient Channabasappa Shivappa Kombali.

Speaking after accepting the award and cash prize presented by Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and The New Indian Express Group Chairman and Managing Director Manojkumar Sonthalia, Shivappa said that the pond in the village once full of water dried up due to deforestation and scanty rain. After rainwater conservation was introduced, the water level which had dropped to 500 to 600 feet has risen to 100 feet, he said.Shivappa urged the Chief Minister to introduce rainwater conservation and harvesting in all villages to make water available throughout the year.

The State government is thinking of introducing rainwater harvesting programme all over the State effectively by taking the help of expert Sri Padre, said Deputy Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa at Kakolu village in Ranebennur taluk Thursday.



Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, Chairman and Managing Director of The New Indian Express Group Manoj Kumar Sonthalia, Primary and Secondary Education Minister Basavaraj Horatti, District Minister C.M. Udasi and Deputy Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa presenting the 'KP Man of The Year' award to Channabasappa Shivappa Kombali at Kakola village on Thursday.

Speaking after presenting the award to Channabasappa Shivappa Kombali, Yediyurappa said that schemes like the Suvarna agricultural pond programme launched for repair and rejuvenation of tanks in villages and check on encroachment of tanks would be speeded up.

In case people come forward, we will give work for one lakh agri ponds in the State, Yediyurappa said.

As donation from the ministers of the coalition government, Rs 2 lakh would be presented to Kakolu villagers for this work, he added. Considering the demand for water, rainwater harvesting is a useful work taken up by Kombali, said Chairman and Managing Director of The New Indian Express Group Manojkumar Sonthalia.

Identifying those who pioneered in helping society and recognising them was like honoring ourselves, Sonthalia said.

EXPRESS ROLE LAUDED: The role played by the Express group during the emergency against the attack on democracy cannot be forgotten, said Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

Expressing his happiness over presenting the award to Kombali, he said the media has acted as an eye-opener and shown our responsibility to popularise rainwater harvesting and conservation.

The government has decided to give training in rainwater harvesting to 93000 GP members, 3500 TP members and 1500 ZP members in the State, said RDP Minister Udasi.

तिरक्या रेषा



● मूळ लेखक :
हरिशंकर परसाई

● अनुवाद :
मुकुंद टाकसाळे

प्रायव्हेट कॉलेजचा जाहीरनामा

(एक बडी 'पार्टी' कॉलेज काढत आहे. त्यांचा एक जाहीरनामा वर्तमानपत्रात छापून आलेला आहेच. पण हिशोबांच्या वह्याप्रमाणेच त्या पार्टीने जाहीरनामेही दोन बनवलेले आहेत. दुसरा 'प्रायव्हेट जाहीरनामा' आम्हांला खऱ्या हिशोबाच्या वहीत दडपून ठेवलेला आढळला. त्याचीच नक्कल इथे देत आहोत. – लेखक)

।। श्री लक्ष्मी प्रसन्न ।।

आम्ही बाबूलाल छोटेलाल फर्मचे सध्याचे मालक आमच्या प्रसिद्ध फर्मची एक नवीन शाखा उघडत आहोत.

या शाखेचे नाव 'गोवरधनदास कॉलेज' राहील.

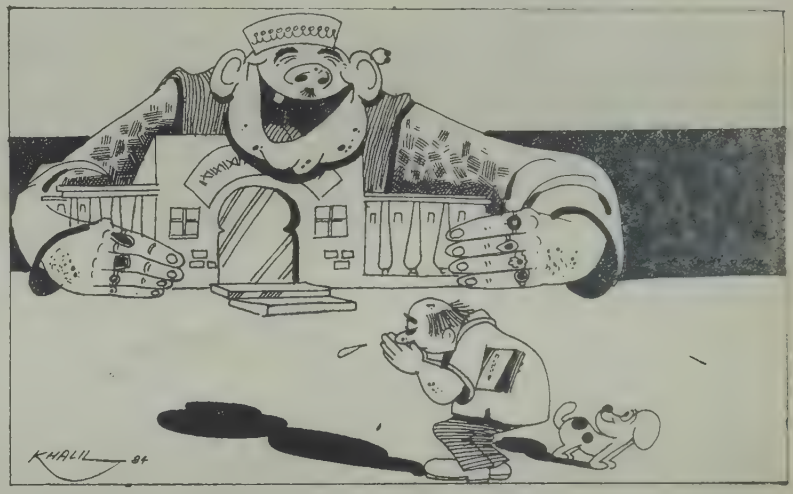
गोवरधनदास हे आमचे परमपूज्य तीर्थरूप होते हे जगजाहीर आहे. आज ते या असार संसारात नाहीत, तेव्हा साहजिकच आमची फर्म सोडल्यास बाकीच्या गोष्टी (ते नसल्यामुळे) आम्हांला 'निस्सार' वाटतात.

सिमेंटच्या किंवा साखरेच्या धंद्यात जेवढा फायदा आहे तेवढा शिक्षणाच्या धंद्यात नाही याची आम्हांला पूर्ण कल्पना आहे. त्या मुळे आमच्या व्यापारी बंधूंना शिक्षणाचे दुकान उघडणे हा आमचा मूर्खपणा वाटेल. ते म्हणतील– 'कॉलेज कशासाठी काढायचे? त्याच पैशात साखरेचा स्टॉक नाही का करून ठेवता येणार?'

त्यांचे म्हणणे चूक नाही. पण यामागे आमची भावना थोडी उदात्तपणाची काहीशी तत्त्वज्ञानात्मक आहे. चौऱ्याऐंशी कोटी योनींनंतर नर-देह प्राप्त होतो– म्हणजे कथा–पुराणातसुद्धा असे सांगतात. तेव्हा जीवनात स्वार्थ आणि परमार्थ दोन्हीही साधला पाहिजे. परमार्थ म्हणजे काय? एखादे काम करायचे की ज्यामुळे लोक आम्हांला दानशूर, त्यागी आणि समाज सेवक समजतील. त्यामुळे कीर्ती हाच परमार्थ आहे. एक काम तरी आपण असे केले पाहिजे की ज्यामुळे नाव अमर होईल.

आमच्या दिवंगत तीर्थरूपांना अमर होण्याची फार लालसा होती. पण जन्मभर फर्मच्या कामातच ते इतके काही व्यग्र राहिले की अमर होण्याची व्यवस्था करायला त्यांना त्यांच्या हयातीत वेळच मिळाला नाही. तो भार आता आमच्या शिरावर आहे. आम्हांला वडलांना अमर बनवायचे आहे. सुरुवातीला आम्ही दर आठवड्यात पाणपोई उघडायची. अजूनही लोकांना स्टेशनजवळील चौकातील 'श्री. गोवरधनदास पाणपोई' आठवत असेल. परंतु नंतर आमच्या असे लक्षात आले की पाणपोईमुळे वडलांचे नाव फक्त उन्हाळ्यातच जिवंत राहते आहे. बाकी दहा महिने वडील ठार विसरले जातात. उन्हाळ्यात रोज आमच्या पाणपोईचे पाणी पिऊन जे जिवंत राहातात ते हिवाळ्यात आमच्या वडलांना विसरतात. 'वैशाखाच्याच महिन्यात आमच्या वडलांनी त्यांच्यावर उपकार केले होते' याची आठवणसुद्धा त्यांना राहात नाही. खरोखर माणसाची जातच कृतघ्न!

पाणपोईमुळे वडील बारा महिने तेरा काळ – थोडक्यात म्हणजे शतकानुशतके अमर राहू शकत नव्हते हे जरी खरे असले तरी पाणपोईचे काम कमी खर्चाचे होते. पण



काटकसरीमुळे कुणाला अमरत्व थोडेच लाभलेले आहे? मग आम्ही विचार केला– त्यांच्या नावानं एखादी धर्मशाळा बांधू. जोपर्यंत धर्मशाळेची इमारत राहील, तोपर्यंत त्यांचे नाव राहील. जर कालान्तराने धर्मशाळा जमिनीत गाडली गेली तर भविष्यकाळात पुराणवस्तूशास्त्रज्ञ उत्खनन करून ती वर काढतील आणि आमच्या वडलांचे नाव इतिहासात कायमचे नोंदले जाईल. पण काही शहाण्या मंडळींनी वेळीच आम्हांला सावध केले. ते म्हणाले, समाजवादाचे मोठ्या प्रमाणावर आक्रमण होते आहे. पुढे दिवस वाईट येणार आहेत. जर समाजवाद इथे आला तर कोणी दीन–दुबळा किंवा भिकारी राहणारच नाही. मग तुमच्या धर्मशाळेत उतरणार कोण? आणि कोण तुमच्या वडलांच्या नावाचे स्मरण करणार?

अखेर खूप विचारविनिमय करून आम्ही कॉलेज काढण्याचा निश्चय केलेला आहे. कॉलेज काढल्यामुळे आमच्या कुटुंबावरं असलेला एक कलंक कायमचा मिटेल. आमचे परमपूज्य तीर्थरूप शिकले–सवरले नव्हते. ज्या व्यक्तीने या फर्मची एवढी भरभराट केली ती व्यक्ती अक्षरशत्रू होती ही मोठ्या शरमेची बाब आहे. पण भावी पिढ्या जेव्हा त्यांच्या नावाचे कॉलेज बघतील तेव्हा त्यांचा असाच समज होईल की 'गोवरधनदास हे विसाव्या शतकातले कोणी महान विद्वान किंवा शिक्षणशास्त्रज्ञ होऊन गेले असावेत, म्हणूनच त्यांच्या नावाने लोकांनी कॉलेज काढलेले दिसते.'

धर्मशाळा किंवा अनाथाश्रम बांधून हा फायदा काही मिळणार नाही.

या कॉलेजच्या स्थापनेसाठी आम्ही एक लाख रुपयांची देणगी दिलेली आहे. यातील ज्ञानबाचा मेख फार थोडयाजणांच्या ध्यानात येईल. प्रत्यक्षात आमच्या खिशातून चाळीस हजारच गेलेले आहेत. साठ हजार असे ना तसे इनकम टॅक्स म्हणून भरावेच लागले असते. चाळीस हजार रुपयांत एक लाखाच्या देणगीचे श्रेय उपटणे हे आमच्या वडलांच्या स्मृतीला साजेसेच झाले.

आम्ही इतर व्यापाऱ्यांकडे गेलो आणि त्यांना म्हणालो, 'आमच्या वडलांना अमर बनवायच्या कार्यात तुम्ही लोकही मदत करा.' त्यांनीसुद्धा आनंदाने पैसे दिले. कारण उघड आहे– आज आमच्या बापाचे काम अडलेलं आहे, उद्या त्यांच्या बापाचे अडू शकते.

अशा रीतीने तीन लाख रुपये गोळा करून आम्ही शिक्षणमंत्र्यांना भेटायला गेलो. शिक्षणमंत्र्यांचं पणजोबा आमच्या पणजोबांच्या दुकानात मुनीम म्हणून कामाला होते. शिक्षणमंत्र्यांना या गोष्टीचा विसर पडायला लागला तर आम्ही लगेच आठवण करून देतो. मागल्या निवडणुकीत आम्ही आमच्या जातीची गठ्ठा मते शिक्षणमंत्र्यांना मिळवून दिलेली होती. वडलांना अमर बनवण्याची योजना आम्ही त्यांच्यासमोर ठेवली आणि म्हणालो, 'पैसे कमी पडत आहेत.' शिक्षणमंत्री म्हणाले, 'ते मला वडलांसारखेच होते. त्या भागातून मला पुन्हा निवडून यायचं आहे. तेव्हा त्यांचा आशीर्वाद पाहिजेच. खरं तर मी स्वतःच त्यांना अमर बनवण्याच्या प्रयत्नात होतो. त्यांच्या नावानं विद्यापीठच काढण्याचा माझा विचार होता. आता जर एका कॉलेजवर तुमचं समाधान होणार असेल तर सरकारतर्फे मी आठ–दहा लाख रुपये त्यांच्या स्मृतिप्रित्यर्थ देऊन टाकीन. आपण त्यांचं हे स्मारक बनवून टाकू."

अशा रीतीने फक्त चाळीस हजार भांडवलावर दहा–बारा लाखाची संस्था आमच्याच बापाची होणार. त्यांचा देह नष्ट झालेला आहे. पण गीतेत म्हटल्याप्रमाणे आत्मा काही मेलेला नाही. तो आत्मा आजसुद्धा तेवढ्याच धंदेवाईक कौशल्याने हो सूत्रे हलवतो आहे.

संस्थेचे काम व्यवस्थित चालले पाहिजे. तो एक आदर्श संस्था बनली पाहिजे अशी आमची इच्छा आहे. त्यांसाठी संस्था चालवताना काही नियम आणि तत्त्वांचे पालन होणे आवश्यक आहे असे आम्हांला वाटते. नियम आणि तत्त्वे खालीलप्रमाणे :–

१. कॉलेजची इमारत बांधण्याचे कंत्राट आमच्या आत्याच्या नवऱ्यालाच दिले जाईल. वडलांच्या स्मृतीशी इमान राखण्यासाठी हे जरुरीचे आहे. वडलांनी शंकराचे देऊळ बांधण्यासाठी वर्गणी गोळा केलेली होती. त्या देवळाचे कंत्राट आत्याच्या नवऱ्यालाच दिलेले होते.

२. सरकारने बांधकामात हस्तक्षेप केला आणि कंत्राट शिक्षणमंत्र्यांचा मेव्हण्याला दिले तर चुना–सिमेंट आमच्याकडून घेणे बंधनकारक राहील.

३. इमारतीच्या बांधकामाच्या काळात जर आमच्या नव्या घराचे बांधकाम उभे राहिले तर तिकडचा माल इकडे वापरला जाऊ शकेल, कारण फर्म एकच आहे.

४. जोपर्यंत आमच्या मामाचे स्टेशनरीचे दुकान आहे, तोपर्यंत कॉलेजसाठी सर्व स्टेशनरी त्याच दुकानातूनच खरेदी करावी लागेल. वडलांचे मामावर फार प्रेम होते आणि त्यांनीच हे दुकान मामाला उघडून दिले होते. दुसऱ्या दुकानातून स्टेशनरी खरेदी करण्यात आली तर वडलांच्या आत्म्याला क्लेश होतील.

५. कॉलेजच्या बगीच्यात आंबा, पपई, फणस इत्यादी झाडे लावण्यात येतील आणि त्या त्या झाडांचे फळे आमच्या घरी पाठविण्यात येतील. फळे पाठवण्याची जबाबदारी प्राचार्यांची राहील. यात कसूर झाल्यास त्या प्राचार्यांविरुद्ध शिस्तभंगाची कारवाई केली जाईल.

६. आमच्या घराण्यातील लग्न निघाले तर कॉलेजची इमारत खाली करून व्हाडाला उतरायला द्यावी लागेल. वीजपाणी वगैरे खर्च कॉलेजच्या हिशोबात धरला जाईल.

७. कॉलेजच्या व्यवस्थापन समितीचे अध्यक्षपद आमच्याकडेच राहील. आमच्यानंतर आमचा मुलगा अध्यक्ष होईल. तीच परंपरा पुढेही चालू राहील. आमच्या वडलांकडून आणि आईकडून ज्यांच्या ज्यांच्याशी आमचे नाते लागते असे नातेवाईक या समितीचे सभासद राहतील.

८. इतर सदस्य असेच असतील की ज्यांचा विद्येशी दुरूनच संबंध आहे. विद्वान मंडळींना एखाद्या गोष्टीचा निरर्थक कीस काढून गोंधळ करण्याची सवय असते. हे एक धंदेवाईक प्रतिष्ठान असल्यामुळे ते चालविण्यात धंद्यातल्या लोकांना– म्हणजेच व्यापारी वर्गाला अग्रक्रम देण्यात येईल.

९. अगोदर जाहीर केल्याप्रमाणे हे कॉलेज ही आमच्याच फर्मची एक शाखा आहे. तेव्हा कॉलेजच्या प्राचार्यांचा दर्जा आमच्या दुकानातल्या हेड–मुनीमाच्या बरोबरीचा राहील. प्राध्यापक मंडळींना मुनीम मानले जाईल.

१०. प्राचार्याला रोज आमच्या दुकानावर 'राम–राम' करण्यासाठी यावे लागेल. ज्या दिवशी तो येणार नाही, त्या दिवशीचा त्याचा पगार कापला जाईल. लागोपाठ पंधरा दिवस तो आला नाही तर त्याला काढून टाकण्यात येईल.

११. प्रत्येक प्राध्यापकाला आठवड्यातून कमीत कमी एकदातरी 'राम राम' करण्यासाठी दुकानावर यावे लागेल. रोज दुकानावर येणाऱ्याला पुढे प्राचार्य होण्याचे खूपच चान्सेस आहेत.

१२. प्यूनला अर्धा वेळ कॉलेजात आणि अर्धा वेळ दुकानात काम करावे लागेल. याबाबत त्याची काही हरकत असू नये–कारण फर्म एकच आहे.

१३. आमच्या घराण्यातल्या प्रत्येक मुला–मुलीचा शिक्षणाचा भार हा कॉलेजच्या टिचिंग स्टाफवरच राहील. त्यांना घरी येऊन फुकटात शिकवावे लागेल आणि परीक्षेअगोदर पेपर फोडण्यापासून ते नंतर नंबर वाढवण्यापर्यंतची सर्व कामे त्यांना करावी लागतील.

१४. प्राध्यापकांचे मुख्य कार्य 'शिकवणे' राहाणार नाही– तर आमची चमचेगिरी करणे आणि इतर सहकाऱ्यांच्या चहाड्या सांगणे हे राहील. चहाड्या ऐकण्यासाठी आमचे कान मध्यरात्रीसुद्धा सज्ज राहतील.

१५. आमच्या कुटुंबातला एखादा मुलगा नालायक निपजला, त्याला धंद्याची अक्कल नसेल तर त्याला प्राध्यापक म्हणून कॉलेजात लावून घ्यावे लागेल.

आम्ही नशापाणी न करता स्वखुशीने ही कलमे जाहीर करीत आहोत.

आम्हांला आशा आहे की सर्व लोक आम्हांला सहकार्य देतील– हे कॉलेज आदर्श संस्था बनावी म्हणून आपला वाटा उचलतील.

इति. चूक–भूल द्यावी घ्यावी.

□ □

कालच आठवा सुदामा इथं आला होता. त्याला मी बाहेरच्या बाहेरच कटवलं. तू इथपर्यंत आलाच कसा ते समजत नाही. बरं, आता आलाच आहेस तर हरकत नाही, पण कृपा करून मैत्री वगैरे बोलू नकोस. मला काय माहीत तू कोण आहेस ते? मी तुझ्याबरोबर सौदा करू शकतो. तुझ्याजवळ राज्याचं एक रहस्य आहे. ते उघड केल्यास शासन कलंकित होईल. बोल, हे रहस्य गुप्त ठेवण्याची किंमत काय? इथं अशी देवाण-घेवाण करूनच तोंड बंद केलं जातं."

मी विचारात पडलो. मामला मैत्रीवरून सौद्यावर आलेला होता. तेव्हा आता संकोच करण्यात अर्थ नव्हता.

"ठीक आहे. तसं तर तसं. काय देणार?"" मी विचारलं.

"दहा हजार सुवर्ण मुद्रा." म्हणाला.

"माझं इमान इतकं स्वस्त समजलास की काय?" मी खोट्या खोट्या रागानं त्याला विचारलं.

"ठीक आहे. एक लाख सुवर्णमुद्रा, एक गाव आणि एक महाल देतो."

हा सौदा मला मान्य होता. या किमतीला मी स्वतःला विकून टाकलं.

कृष्णानं त्याच्या रथातून मला परत पोचवलं. परत आल्यानंतर मी दोन मुठी पोहे आणि दोन लोकवाली गोष्ट मनानंच जुळवून सगळीकडं पसरवली. लोक आता यावरच विश्वास ठेवत राहणार.

कधी काळी ही पानं जेव्हा प्रकाशात येतील तेव्हा हे सत्य लोकांना समजेल की पोह्याचा एक दाणासुद्धा कृष्णाच्या मुखात गेला नाही. सगळेच्या सगळे पोहे 'खरवड' वनून कर्मचाऱ्यांच्या घशात गेले. लोकांना हेही ध्यानात येईल की मी कृष्णाकडून दान घेतलेलं नव्हतं. त्याच्याशी सौदा केलेला होता आणि त्या बदल्यात काही काळ मी माझं ईमान गहाण ठेवलेलं होतं. □

आपसकी बात (पान ३ वरून)

फेब्रुवारीचा शेवटचा आठवडा सुरू झाला की उगीचच सर्वांनाच बजेटचं कुतूहल वाटायला लागतं.

कर वाढणार अशी अफवा पसरते.

माल गडप होतो.

लोक खरेदी करायला लागतात.

मोटारवाले पेट्रोल भरून घेतात.

शेवटचा दिवस जवळ येईल तसतशी उत्सुकता वाढू लागते

आणि अखेरीस ही अद्भुत चीज बाहेर येते.

बाकी पुढचं सगळं तयारच असतं.

प्रतिक्रिया, तज्ज्ञांची मतं वगैरे!

श्री. भा. महाबळ

युद्धे आणि संहार (पान ११ वरून)

युद्धानंतर अर्थतंत्रावर पडणारा बोजा

अलीकडच्या ३५ वर्षांत युद्धे आणि शस्त्रास्त्रांसाठी झालेल्या खर्चांचे आकडे आश्चर्यचकित करणारे आहेत. हा खर्च ७,५००० अब्ज रुपये एवढा आहे.

५०० अब्ज अब्ज अब्ज फ्रॅंकचा खर्च

आजपर्यंत झालेल्या युद्धामुळे मानवजातीला झालेल्या साधनसंपत्तीच्या नुकसानीच्या अंदाजाचे आंकडे वाचून डोकेच चक्राऊन जाते. एका स्वीस, विचारवंताने केलेल्या मोजणीनुसार हे नुकसान ५०० क्वीन्टीलीओन स्वीस फ्रान्क आहे. क्वीन्टीलीओन म्हणजे आकड्यामागे ३० शून्य, आता ही रक्कम आकड्यात लिहिली तर ५००,०००,०००,०००,०००,०००,०००,०००,०००,०००, पांचशे अब्ज अब्ज अब्ज स्वीस फ्रान्क होते.

अलीकडच्या इतिहासावर एक दृष्टिक्षेप

फार जुन्या इतिहासावर दृष्टी न टाकता अलीकडच्या इतिहासाचे आकडे तपासावयाचे असतील तर तेसुद्धा चकीत करणारे आहेत. पहिल्या जागतिक युद्धात साधनसंपत्तीचे नुकसान ३३८ अब्ज डॉलर म्हणजे ३,३८० अब्ज रुपयांचा अंदाज करण्यात आला होता तर दुसऱ्या जागतिक युद्धात साधनसंपत्तीच्या नुकसानीचे आकडे ४०,००० अब्ज डॉलर म्हणजे ४ लाख अब्ज रुपयांवर होता.

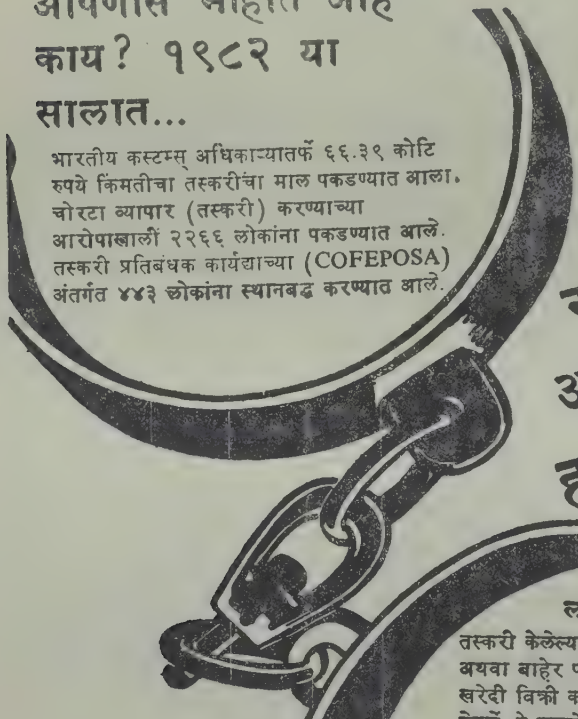
अणुयुद्धात कोणी जिवंत राहणार नाही!

पूर्वी झालेल्या युद्धात मानवहत्तेचा आणि साधनसंपत्तीच्या नुकसानीचा अंदाज काढता आला. परंतु पृथ्वीतलावरील जीवनाचा १५ वेळा नाश करू शकेल तेवढ्या ५०,००० अणुशस्त्राच्या दारुगोळ्याचा उपयोग झाला तर नंतर प्राणहानीचा अंदाज काढण्यासाठी जिवंत कोण असेल? एका सद्धांतिक मोजणीनुसार, सामूहिक नरसंहारासाठी ही ५० हजार अणुशस्त्रे जर दर मिनिटाला एक याप्रमाणे फोडली तर सतत ४ आठवड्यापर्यंत चालतील एवढी आहेत. परंतु त्यांची विराट विध्वंसक शक्ती तर थोड्या मिनिटातच पृथ्वीतलावरील तमाम जीवनाचा नाश करण्यासाठी पुरेशी आहे. अशा स्थितीत त्यानी किती विनाश घडविला त्याचा अंदाज घेण्यासाठी कोणीही मानव जिवंत नसेल. ५,५०० वर्षांत १४,५०० युद्धे आणि ३ अब्ज ८४ कोटी लोकांचे हत्या याशिवायअब्जावधी रुपयांच्या साधनसंपत्तीचा नाश. तिसरे अणुयुद्ध थांबविण्यासाठी कंबर कसली नाही तर मानवजातीच्या उज्वल भविष्यासाठी फार उशीर झालेला असेल. □



आपणांस माहीत आहे काय? १९८२ या सालात...

भारतीय कस्टम्स् अधिकाऱ्यातर्फे ६६.३९ कोटि रुपये किंमतीचा तस्करीचा माल पकडण्यात आला.
चोरटा व्यापार (तस्करी) करण्याच्या आरोपाखालीं २२६६ लोकांना पकडण्यात आले.
तस्करी प्रतिबंधक कार्यद्याच्या (COFEPOSA) अंतर्गत ४४३ लोकांना स्थानबद्ध करण्यात आले.



तस्करीमुळे राष्ट्रीय अर्थव्यवस्थेची हानी होते

लक्षात ठेवा

तस्करी केलेल्या वस्तूं देशात आणणे अथवा बाहेर पाठविणें, तसेंच त्यांची खरेदी विक्री करणें, बाळगणें, दडवून ठेवणें, हे कायदेशीर गुन्हे आहेत. अशा गुन्हासाठीं पुढील शिक्षा होऊ शकते.

- अशा सर्व आक्षेपार्ह वस्तूंची जप्ती
- भुर्दंड आणि कारावासाची शिक्षा

आपण काय करू शकतां ?

तस्करी केलेल्या वस्तूंचा बहिष्कार करा आणि तस्करीचे निर्मूलन करण्यासाठी मदत करा.

अशा व्यवहाराची आपल्या जवळच्या कस्टम्स अधिकाऱ्यास माहिती देऊन, अशी राष्ट्र विरोधी कृत्यें उघडकीस आणा आणि बक्षीस मिळवा.

डायरेक्टोरेट ऑफ पब्लिकेशन्स
कस्टम्स अँड सेंट्रल एक्साइज
न्यू दिल्ली

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तर बरं अशी माझी अवस्था झालेली होती दीनबंधूचे सेवक एका दीनाला कशी वागणूक देत होते पाहा.

एवढ्यात कार्यालयाच्या दुसऱ्या टोकाकडून एक रुबाबदार कर्मचारी ओरडला, "अरे काही खरवडीची व्यवस्था आहे की नाही? का तसाच महाराजांना भेटायला आलेला आहेस?"

चारी बाजूंनी एकदम 'खरवड', 'खरवड' असा एकच कल्ला झाला.

मला 'खरवड' हा शब्द नवा होता. मी म्हणालो. "देवा, हा 'खरवड' हा काय प्रकार आहे? शब्द-कोशात तर हा शब्द नाही. कुठल्या काव्यात किंवा तत्त्वज्ञानातही हा शब्द मी वाचलेला नाही. बहुधा हा इथल्या शासनाचाच विशेष शब्दप्रयोग असणार. मला कल्पना आहे की चांगलं शासन हे काही विशिष्ट शब्दांच्या आणि आकडेवारीच्या जोरावर चालत असतं."

त्यातला एक शहाणा होता. तो म्हणाला, "ब्राम्हणदेवा, राजदरबारात तुम्ही आलेले आहात. आणि शासनाची नीती तुम्हांला ठाऊक नाही? तुम्हांला साधी 'खरवड' सुद्धा ठाऊक नाही?"

मी मोठ्या नम्रतेनं म्हणालो, "बंधू, मी गावाकडला माणूस आहे. शासनाशी आमचा संबंध फक्त कर भरण्यापुरता. राजधानीचे रीतीरिवाज आम्हांला कुठून ठाऊक असणार? आमच्या गावाकडं दूध उकळल्यानंतर जी मलई कढईला चिकटून राहाते, ती खरवडून घेतात. तिलाच आम्ही 'खरवड' म्हणतो."

"बरोबर." तो म्हणाला, "अगदी अशाच प्रकारे शासनाच्या कढईत जी मलई चिकटलेली असते, ती आम्ही खरवडून घेतो. आम्हीसुद्धा तिलाच 'खरवड' म्हणतो."

तरीसुद्धा माझ्या काही लक्षात आलं नाही. त्या सगळ्यांना माझी दया आली.

तो शहाणा माणूस म्हणाला, "अजूनही तुमच्या ध्यानात आलेलं दिसत नाही विप्रदेव. आम्हांला असं म्हणायचं आहे– हेही एक मंदिर आहे. काहीतरी भेट वगैरे आणलीच असणार. महाराजांना काय रिकाम्या हातांनी तुम्ही नक्कीच भेटणार नाही. तर त्यात आम्हांलाही आमचा हिस्सा पाहिजे."

मी अडचणीत पडलो. मला गप्प बसलेलं बघून एका कर्मचाऱ्यानं विचारलं, "तुमच्या त्या पुरचुंडीत काय आहे विप्रदेव? सोनं?"

मी पोह्यांची पुरचुंडी हातानं दाबून धरली.

शहाणा कर्मचारी म्हणाला, "काय आहे त्यात? उघडा ती–"

मी घाबरलो. जर पुरचुंडीतले पोहे यांच्यासमोर उघडे पडले तर नक्कीच हे माझी कुचेष्टा करतील. मी पोह्यांची पुरचुंडी आणखी घट्ट आवळून धरली.

तेवढ्यात सुरक्षा-विभागाचा अधिकारी पुढं सरसावला. त्याचं बलदंड शरीर, उग्र चेहरा आणि विंचवाच्या नांगीसारख्या मिश्या बघून माझ्या पोटात गोळाच आला. तो कर्कश ओरडला, "अरे, दोन ठेवून द्या त्याला– मग बरोबर जाग्यावर येईल हा बम्मनका बच्चा!"

मी शहारलो. तावडतोब पुरचुंडी उघडली. पोहे बघून त्या सगळ्यांनाच फार आश्चर्य वाटलं. ते एकमेकाकडं बघू लागले. एकजण म्हणाला, "बामण येडा झालेला दिसतोय. पोहे घेऊन कुणी महाराजांना भेटायला आल्याचं ऐकलंय का कधी?"

एव्हाना तो रुबाबदार कर्मचारी आमच्या इथं येऊन पोचला होता. तो स्वतःची अक्कल चालवून म्हणाला, "नक्कीच काहीतरी गोची असणार. हे नेहमीसारखे साधे पोहे वाटत नाहीत. साधे पोहे घेऊन महाराजांना भेटायला कोण कशाला कडमडेल? या ब्राम्हणांचं आपल्याला काही समजत नाही. त्यांना बरेच मंत्रतंत्र येत असतात. हे पोहे मंतरलेले दिसताहेत– आणि म्हणूनच महाराजांसाठी तो ते घेऊन चाललेला असणार."

मी तावडतोब मनाशी ठरवलं यांचा हा भ्रम कायम ठेवायचा आणि तोच धागा पकडून कृष्णापर्यंत पोचायचं. मी म्हणालो, "अकरा रात्री आणि अकरा दिवस मंत्रोच्चार करून मी हे पोहे सिद्ध केलेले आहेत."

"असं? काय गुण आहे या – – पोह्यांचा?" कुणीतरी विचारलं.

"मनोवांछित फल-धनप्राप्ती, स्त्री-सुख, संतती, स्वास्थ्य, शत्रूनाश!"

हे ऐकता क्षणी सगळे पोह्यांवर अगदी तुटून पडले. प्रत्येकाच्याच मनात काही ना काहीतरी इच्छा होती. कार्यालयाचं कामकाज बंदच झालं. सगळे कर्मचारी तिथं जमा झाले. जो यायचा, तो चिमुटभर पोहे तोंडात टाकायचा.

जेव्हा फक्त अर्धी मूठ पोहे उरले तेव्हा मी पुरचुंडी घाईघाईने बांधू लागलो. त्यांना म्हणालो, "आता एवढे महाराजांसाठी राहू द्या." पण त्याच वेळी तिथं एक बडा अधिकारी आला आणि खास आवाज लावून म्हणाला, "ए... कुठं घेऊन चाललास? मला खायचेत ते. महाराजांना दुसऱ्या खेपेला घेऊन ये."

त्यानं उरलेल्या सगळ्या पोह्यांचा बकाणा भरला.

मी फडकं झटकलं आणि काखेत दाबून धरलं.

लांब लांब मिश्यांचा तो भयानक सुरक्षा-अधिकारी एका सेवकाला बोलावून आज्ञा देता झाला, "यांना महाराजांकडं घेऊन जा."

मी सेवकाच्या मागेमागे जाऊ लागलो. चार पावलंच पुढं गेलो असेन तेवढ्यात तो मिश्यावाला धावत आला आणि माझा हात पकडून त्यानं दम भरला, "हे बघ बामणा, महाराजांना जर का तू हे पोह्यांचं प्रकरण सांगितलंस, तर तुझी ब्राम्हणी विधवा झालीच म्हणून समज."

त्यानं हात सोडला. मी भराभरा सेवकाच्या मागोमाग महालात निघून आलो.

ही घटना मी कृष्णाला सांगितल्यावर तो मोठ्या चिंतेत पडला.

"राज्य करतोस की झोपा काढतोस? किती अंधाधुंदी माजलीय तुझ्या राज्यात. तुझे राज-कर्मचारी साधे पोहेसुद्धा हिसकावून घेताहेत!" मी कृष्णाला खडसावलं.

"खरं तर मला ही परिस्थिती मुळीच ठाऊक नव्हती. आजच्या आज मी एक चौकशी-समिती नियुक्त करतो. पण बाहेर ही गोष्ट तू कुणाला सांगू नकोस. राज्याची फार मोठी बदनामी होईल." कृष्ण म्हणाला.

आता आखडण्याची हीच संधी होती. मी म्हणालो, "मी ब्राम्हण आहे. प्राण गेला तरी सत्य काही मी लपवणार नाही. राज्यात असा अंधार माजलेला आहे हे मी दवंडी पिटून जाहीरपणे सांगेन सगळ्यांना."

कृष्णाची परिस्थिती मोठी दयनीय झाली. तो म्हणाला, "हे बघ, तू माझा मित्र आहेस. मित्रासाठी तू थोडंसुद्धा खोटं बोलणार नाहीस का?"

"अरे वा! आता तुला मैत्री आठवायला लागली काय?" मी उपहासानं विचारलं, "यापूर्वी तुला आपला सुदामा नावाचा मित्र दारिद्र्यात दिवस कंठतोय याची कधी फिकीर होती?"

"हे बघ, माझी परिस्थितीही तू जरा समजून घे." कृष्ण म्हणाला, "मला कोण आपलं आणि कोण परकं तेच समजेनासं झालंय. मला हे राज्यपद मिळाल्यापासून असंख्य लोकं माझे आप्तस्वकीय बनून मदत मागायला इथं येऊन गेलेली आहेत. आतापर्यंत वीस हजार काका, पंधरा हजार मामा, पंचवीस हजार भाच्चे, दहा हजार मावश्या आणि आठ हजार काक्या इथं येऊन भेटून गेलेले आहेत. आता तूच सांग, की कुणाकुणाचं काम करू? आणि खरं सांगायचं तर माझा वर्गमित्र जो सुदामा होता तो तूच आहेस अशी अजूनही माझी खात्री पटलेली नाही. कारण

कडं मोठ्या आश्चर्यानं पाहिलं. नंतर त्यानं चिडून विचारलं, "पोहे कुठं गेले? तू कपट केलेलं दिसतंय. वहिनीनं माझ्यासाठी पोहे पुरचुंडीत बांधून दिल्याचं मी माझ्या दिव्य-दृष्टीनं बघितलंय होतं."

माझ्या मनात आलं त्याला विचारावं– "हे राजा, माझ्या परममित्रा, ज्या दिव्य-दृष्टीनं तू मित्रांच्या बायकांना पोह्यांच्या पुरचुंड्या बांधताना बघतोस– त्याच दृष्टीनं लोकांची गरिबी आणि उपासमार का नाही बघत?" पण मनाशी काही विचार करून मी गप्प राहिलो.

कृष्ण पोहे खाण्यासाठी अगदी उतावळा झालेला होता. माझ्यावरच्या प्रेमामुळं नाही, तर आजूबाजूला जे चित्रकार उभे होते ते महाराजांचं पोहे खातानाचं चित्र काढण्यासाठी तयारीत उभे होते– त्यांच्यासाठी चित्र काढून झाल्यावर खाली लिहिलं जाणार– 'दीनबंधू एका दीनाचे पोहे खात असताना.'

"पोहे तू स्वतःच खाऊन टाकलेस की काय?' कृष्णानं कृतक कोपानं विचारलं.

"नाही." मी म्हणालो.

"मग कुठं गेले?"

"ते मी सांगणार नाही. मी शब्द दिलेला आहे. मी वचनबद्ध आहे."

"वचनबद्ध? कुणाशी?"

"तुमच्या सुरक्षा-विभागाच्या अधिकाऱ्याशी. त्यानं दम भरलाय– जर प्रकरण महाराजापर्यंत गेलं तर तुझी ब्राम्हणी विधवा होईल म्हणून."

कृष्ण हसला. त्यानं विचारलं, – "प्रकरण? कसलं प्रकरण? मित्रा, तू मला सगळं व्यवस्थित सांग बघू. मी तुला अभय-दान देतो. तुला मी माझ्या स्वतःच्या रथातून घरी पोचवीन, मग तर झालं?"

कृष्णाचं आश्वासन मिळाल्यावर मला थोडा धीर आला. मी म्हणालो, "ठीक आहे. सांगतो. पण त्या अगोदर राज्य-शासनातली तुझी थोडी परीक्षा घेतो. मला सांग, 'खरवड' कशाला म्हणतात आणि चांगल्या शासनात खरवडीचं काय महत्त्व आहे?"

कृष्ण माझ्याकडं बावळटासारखा बघतच राहिला. म्हणाला, "खरवड? मी तर हा शब्दसुद्धा कधी ऐकलेला नाही."

"आश्चर्य आहे!" मी म्हणालो, "शासनाच्या सगळ्यात महत्त्वाच्या नीतीची तुला काहीही माहिती नाही आणि तरीही तू राज्य करतोस?"

"ते जाऊ दे. तू अगोदर पोह्याबद्दल सांग." कृष्ण घाईघाईनं म्हणाला.

मग मी त्याला सगळी इत्थंभूत हकीकत सांगितली. तीच इथं लिहितो आहे:–

गावोगाव 'भिक्षांदेही' करून मंगल दरमंजल करत मी अखेर द्वारकेला येऊन पोचलो. द्वारकेचं वैभव बघून मी चकितच झालो. सर्व धन द्वारकेत एकत्र आलेलं होतं. सर्व विद्या तिथं एकत्र जमलेल्या होत्या. मोठमोठे कलावंत, विद्वान, कवी आणि गायक राजधानीत आश्रयाला आलेले होते. त्यांना



मोठमोठे पुरस्कार वाटले जात होते. आता या सगळ्यांत माझ्यासारख्या दीन ब्राम्हणाची कोण दखल घेणार? मी नगरीच्या बाहेरच आंघोळ केलेली नसतानाही कपाळावर चंदनाचा टिळा लावून ठेवला होता. त्यामुळं विचारल्यावर लोक कमीत कमी मार्ग तरी सांगत होते.

विचारत विचारत मी कृष्णाच्या महालासमोर येऊन पोचलो. तिथल्या एका कर्मचाऱ्याला मी विचारलं, "बन्धो, मला महाराजांना भेटायचे आहे."

त्यानं मला एकदा नखशिखांत न्याहाळलं. मग मला बहुधा टाळण्यासाठी तो म्हणाला, "तिकडं डाव्या बाजूच्या कार्यालयात जा. तिथं विचारपूस केल्यावर जर परवानगी मिळाली, तरच तुला भेटायला जाता येईल." नंतर क्षणभर विचार करून त्यानं प्रश्न केला, "तू 'बंधो' असं का म्हणालास?"

"माणूस माणसाला 'बंधू' किंवा 'भाऊ'च म्हणणार. दुसरं काय म्हणणार?"

"अगदीच भोळा दिसतोयस तू. इथून पुढं कुठल्याही सरकारी कर्मचाऱ्याला 'बंधू' म्हणू नकोस. माणूस असणं त्यांना अप्रतिष्ठेचं वाटतं. त्यांना 'देवा' म्हणायचं, लक्षात ठेव." त्यानं मला समजावून सांगितलं.

मी ती गोष्ट पक्की लक्षात ठेवली आणि त्या प्रचंड कार्यालयाच्या दरवाज्यापाशी येऊन पोचलो. तिथं बरेच कर्मचारी होते. त्यापैकी बरेचसे कर्मचारी आपआपसांत गप्पा मारत बसलेले होते. ते मधूनच आपल्या स्थानावरून उठत आणि बाजूच्या जलपान-गृहात जाऊन बसत. माझ्या लक्षात आलं की त्या सगळ्यांना याच कामासाठी राज्याकडून पगार मिळत होता.

मी बराच वेळ उभा राहिलो. मग धाडस करून आत घुसलो. एका कर्मचाऱ्यानं दरडावून विचारलं, "ए... ए... कुठं घुसतोयस? ही काय धर्मशाळा वाटली की काय तुला? तिकडं- तिकडं धर्मशाळा आहे आणि तिकडंच सदावर्त चाललेलं आहे." त्यानं दक्षिण दिशेला बोट दाखवलं.

"देवा, मला महाराजांना भेटायचं आहे."

तो आश्चर्यानं माझ्याकडं बघतच राहिला. मग एकदम खोखो हसून तो म्हणाला "विप्रदेव, तुम्ही चुकीच्या ठिकाणी आलेले आहात. हे वेडयाचं इस्पितळ नव्हे."

"माझ्या फाटक्या देहावर आणि फाटक्या वस्त्रांवर जाऊ नका. मी वेडा नाही. माझं डोकं शाबूत आहे. मला खरोखरच महाराज कृष्णाची गाठ घ्यायची आहे."

तेवढ्यात इतरही बरेच कर्मचारी येऊन माझ्याभोवती उभे राहिले. त्यातला एक म्हणू लागला, "फारच मोठी महत्त्वाकांक्षा आहे आपली विप्रदेव. काय काम काढलंय महाराजांकडं?"

"ते माझे मित्र आहेत. आम्ही एका वर्गात होतो." मी म्हणालो. त्यावर ते सगळे एकदम हसले.

"वा! महाराजांना तुम्हीच बरे मापडलात बरोबर शिकायला!" एकजण म्हणाला.

"विप्रदेव, तुम्ही भांग-बिंग ढोसता वाटतं!" दुसरा म्हणाला.

"आपण कोणत्या देशाचे राजे आहात?" तिसऱ्यानं विचारलं.

संकटांमुळं माझ्या शरीराची जी अवस्था झाली होती आणि दारिद्र्यामुळं कपड्यांची जो अवस्था झालेली होती त्याकडं बघून हे कर्मचारी माझी टिंगल-टवाळी करत होते, कुचेष्टा करत होते. मी इकडं ग्लानीनं मरायला लागलेलो होतो. धरणी दुभंगून पोटात घेईल

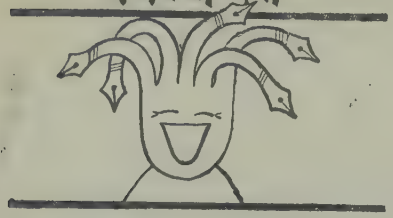
सूत्रबध्द खून

मोहन • बापू पाटील

इन्स्पेक्टर गरूड


पैशाचा अपहार केल्याच्या आरोपावरून! द्वारकानाथनी तुम्हाला पकडलं, होय की नाही ?
त्यांच्या खुनाचा दोष माझ्यावर काय म्हणून लादता ? मी तो केलेला नाही.
असं तुम्ही म्हणता, मि. रूपचंद. पळून जाण्याचा फुकट प्रयत्न करू नका. तुमच्यावर लक्ष ठेवून आहोत आम्ही. नंतर मी येईनच. चल रे, बलबिर
28/19
©RANG REKHA FEATURES PVT. LTD. 1983.
तुम्हाला काय वाटतं साहेब ? त्यानं केला खून ?
अधिक पुरावा मिळाल्याखेरीज काही सांगता येणार नाही. चल अरविंदला भेटू.
द्वारकानाथच्या घरी –
काय अरविंद, तुला काय म्हणायचंय?
साहेब, मी निरपराधी आहे हो!
काय गडबड आहे रे ?
घरात –
मी इन्स्पेक्टर गरूड. मी खुनाचा तपास करतोय, शेठ
माहित आहे मला, माझं नांव अमरनाथ. या इन्स्पेक्टर, बसा.
28/20
©RANG REKHA FEATURES PVT. LTD. 1983.
साहेब, तुम्ही आम्हाला काही मदत कराल का ?
दुर्दैवाने नाही, काल मी पुण्याला भेलो होतो आणि हो आताच येतोय. अरविंद पण आलाय होता
दिशानकर
खून का झाला असावा ? काही कारण सांगता येईल तुम्हाला ?
माझ्या भावाला अनेक शत्रू होते. त्यांच्यापैकी एखाद्यानं ..... पण मला नक्की सांगता येणार नाही.
आणि हो, अरविंदवर आमचा पूर्ण भरवसा आहे. या घटनेत त्याचा काहीहात असावा असं नाही वाटत मला.
ते पोलिसांनी ठरवायचंय, नाही का, अमरनाथ? सहकार्याबद्दल आपले आभार.
28/21
©RANG REKHA FEATURES PVT. LTD. 1983.
परतताना –
हं, बलबिर काय म्हणतोस ?
साहेब मला वाटतं की अरविंदच गुन्हेगार आहे. त्यात त्याचा हेतू होता आणि त्याला तशी संधीही होती !
क्रमशः

तिरक्या रेषा



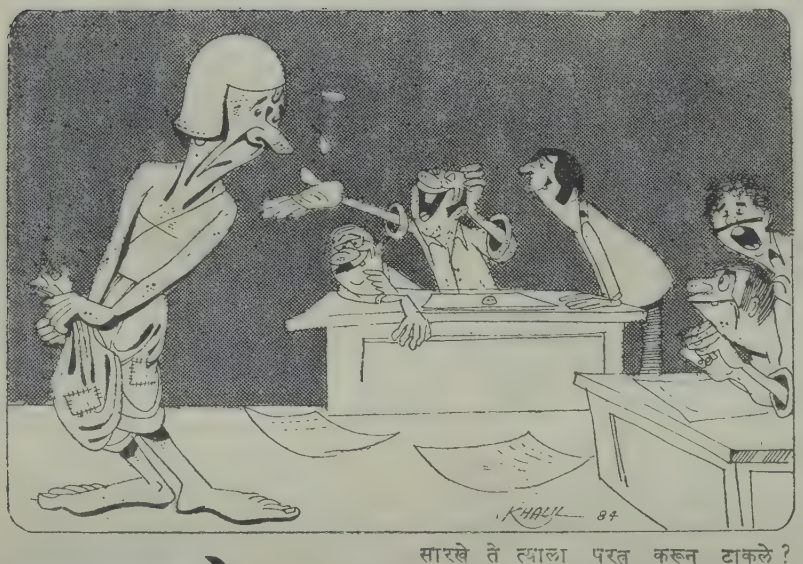
● मूळ लेखक

हरिशंकर परसाई

● अनुवाद

मुकुंद टाकसाळे

सुदाम्याचे पोहे



(कृष्णाकडून मन मानेल तशी संपत्ती प्राप्त केल्यावर सुदामा ब्राम्हण आपल्या महालात आरामात राहू लागला. त्याला काम असं काही करावं लागतच नव्हतं. त्यामुळं ब्राम्हणीशी भांडणं आणि जांभया देणं यातून जर वेळ मिळालाच तर तो थोडेफार लेखन-वाचन करायचा. त्यानं लिहून ठेवलेल्या आठवणी आणि डायरीचा काही भाग आता हाती लागलेला आहे. त्यातूनच हा कृष्ण–भेटीचा प्रसंग आम्ही उद्धवस्त करत आहोत. –लेखक)

. . . लोकांच्या टीका करण्यानं आणि नावं ठेवण्यानं मी अगदी वैतागून गेलेलो आहे. काय तर म्हणे कृष्णानं प्रजेच्या तिजोरीतलं धन उचलून आपल्या मित्राला देऊन टाकलं. मला थोडसं धन दिलं. यात कृष्णानं असं काय मोठं गैरवर्तन केलं तेच मला समजत नाही. राज्य-पद प्राप्त झाल्यावर कोण आपल्या भाऊबंदांचं आणि मित्रांचं भलं करत नाही ? काही लोकतर मलाच मूर्ख म्हणतात. म्हणतात– 'कृष्णानं मला दोन मुठी पोह्याच्या बदल्यात दोन लोक देऊ केले होते पण मी मुर्खासारखे ते त्याला परत करून टाकले ? काल पहाटे महालाच्या आवारात दातवण चघळत हिंडत होतो. मला अशा पद्धतीनं रोज प्रहरभर दात घासण्याची सवय आहे. कारण कुठूनतरी वेळ घालवणं महत्त्वाचं असतं. समोरून देवदत्त आपल्या कुण्या परदेशी मित्रावरोबर चाललेला होता. माझ्याकडं बोट दाखवून देवदत्त त्याला तेच म्हणाला, "हाच तो मूर्ख सुदामा ! कृष्णानं त्याला दोन लोक दिले होते, पण यानं ते परत केले." हे ऐकून माझ्या अंगाची अगदी लाहीलाही झाली. पण मी निमूटपणे क्रोध गिळून टाकला. दुसरं काय करणार ? मीच ती गोष्ट पसरवलेली होती. आणि आश्चर्याची गोष्ट अशी की लोकांनी माझ्यावर विश्वास ठेवला. या युगात माणसाच्या बुद्धीला काय झालंय कुणास ठाऊक ! एकसुद्धा माणूस माझ्यापाशी येऊन असं म्हणाला नाही की हे मिथ्यावादी सुदामा, जर कृष्ण असा भेटायला येणाऱ्या प्रत्येकाला एक-दोन लोक दान करत सुटला असता तर त्याला रोज हजारेक लोक दान करावे लागले असते. पण लोक फक्त तीनच आहेत आणि मथुरा तिन्ही लोकांहून वेगळी आहे आणि हे मिथ्यावादी ब्राम्हणा, तू जर हे सांगत असशील की फक्त तूच त्याला भेटायला गेलेला होतास तर तेही साफ खोटं आहे. कुणीही जेव्हा राजधानीला जातो, तेव्हा उच्च पदावर जे जे ओळखीचे लोक असतात त्यांना भेटून येतोच. तशात कृष्ण हसतमुख आणि मनमोकळ्या स्वभावाचा आहे. त्याला नृत्य, संगीत, नाटक यांचा शौक आहे. त्याच्या आसपास सुंदर सुंदर कलावंत स्त्रिया सदैव वावरत असतात. ज्या राजकीय नेत्यांच्या आसपास सुंदर तरुणींचा घोळका असतो. त्याला भेटायला येणाऱ्यांना काय तोटा ?

कुणीही अशी शंका उपस्थित केली नाही. आता युगानुयुगं लोक त्याच गोष्टीवर विश्वास ठेवणार– 'कृष्णानं माझे दोन मुठी पोहे खाऊन मला दोन लोक दिले आणि मी ते त्याला परत देऊन टाकले ! पण आजमात्र मी खरी गोष्ट काय आहे ते लिहून ठेवणार आहे. 'काल अनंत आहे आणि पृथ्वी अफाट आहे'. तेव्हा कुणाच्या तरी हातात कधीतरी ही पानं पडतील आणि त्या आधारावर तो विश्वाला ओरडून सांगेल की– 'मूठभर पोह्याची आणि दोन लोकांची गोष्ट खोटी आहे. सुदाम्यानं कृष्णाकडून दान घेतलेलं नव्हतं तर एकमेकांच्या सोईसाठी त्यानं तो कृष्णाशी सौदा केलेला होता.'

जेव्हा मी द्वारकेला जायला निघालो तेव्हा ब्राम्हणीनं शेजारून पावशेर पोहे उसने आणले आणि पुरचंडीत बांधून दिले. सत्तेवरचा माणूस भेट दिल्याशिवाय काम करत नाही हे तिला चांगलं ठाऊक होतं. माझ्या घरात पावशेरसुद्धा पोहे मिळाले नसते अशी काही परिस्थिती नव्हती. पण ब्राम्हणीला हेही ठाऊक होतं की राजपुरुष उधार उसनवारीच्या किंवा चोरीच्या मालामुळं विशेष प्रसन्न होत असतात.

कृष्णानं अत्यंत प्रेमानं मला जवळ बसवलं. माझ्याजवळची पुरचंडी हिसकावून घेतली, उलटी पालटी करून बघितली. त्यात पोह्याचा कणसुद्धा नव्हता. कृष्णानं माझ्या

तू जाणून घे आणि ती दूर कर–"

वैष्णव जे समजायचं ते समजला.

त्यानं लवकरच मटण, मासे, कोंबडी यांची सोय केली.

हॉटेलचं गिऱ्हाइक वाढू लागलं.

मग एके दिवशी पुन्हा तोच एक्झिक्युटिव्ह त्याच्याकडे आला. त्याला म्हणाला, "हं, आता ठीक आहे. 'नॉनव्हेज' चांगलं मिळायला लागलेलं आहे. पण एक गोष्ट आहे."

"कोणती ?" वैष्णवानं विचारलं.

"मटण पचण्यासाठी काहीतरी औषध पाहिजे बुवा !"

"लवणभास्कर चूर्ण ठेवत जाऊ का ? वैष्णवानं विचारलं.

"एक्झिक्युटिव्हनं कपाळावर हात मारून घेतला. "साधी गोष्ट तुमच्या लक्षात येत नाही ..." तो म्हणाला, "माझ्या म्हणण्याचा अर्थ होता– दारू! दारूचा बार उघडा आता."

वैष्णव एकदम गप्प झाला. "दारू? दारू इथं कशी द्यायची ? कुणाला पाहिजे असेल तर भगवान विष्णूच्या पायाचं तीर्थ मिळण्याची सोय मी इथं आनंदानं करू शकेन. पण मदिरा ? हे राम !"

दुसऱ्या दिवशी वैष्णव भगवानाला म्हणाले, "प्रभो, लोक आता 'मदिरा हवी' म्हणताहेत. मी आपला भक्त ! मी मदिरेची सोय कशी करणार ?"

वैष्णवच्या 'पवित्र आत्म्यातून' आवाज आला,– "मूर्खा, हॉटेल बसवण्याचा तुझा विचार आहे का ? देवदेवता सोमरस पीत होते. तो सोमरस म्हणजे आजची मदिराच ! ती दिल्यानं तुझ्या वैष्णव धर्माला कसा काय बाध येतो ? सामवेदात सोमरस म्हणजेच मदिरेच्या स्तुतीसाठी तब्बल ६३ श्लोक खर्ची घातलेले आहेत. तुला धर्माचं काही ज्ञान आहे की नाही ?"

वैष्णवानं इष्ट तो बोध घेतला.

त्यानं हॉटेलात 'बार' उघडला.

आता हॉटेल थाटात चालायला लागलं. वैष्णव खुशीत होता.

एक दिवस एकजण येऊन म्हणाला "आता हॉटेल ठीक चाललेलं आहे. दारूसुद्धा आहे. मटणसुद्धा आहे. पण आता जिवंत 'फ्लेश' पाहिजे बुवा ! त्या शिवाय गंमत नाही."

"हे 'फ्लेश' कसलं असतं ?" वैष्णवानं विचारलं.

"कॅबरे ! बाई कपडे काढून नाचते तो कॅबरे !"

"मी कट्टर वैष्णव आहे. मी भगवानाला विचारीन."

दुसऱ्या दिवशी वैष्णवानं प्रभू चरणावर माथा ठेवला. "प्रभो, लोक आता 'हॉटेलात बाईचा नाच व्हायला पाहिजे' म्हणताहेत. अर्धनग्न किंवा पूर्णनग्न !"

वैष्णवाच्या शुद्ध आत्म्याचा आवाज आला. "मूर्खा, माझा भक्त असताना तुला कसला संकोच वाटतो आहे ?"

प्रभूच्या संमतीनं वैष्णवानं 'कॅबरे' चालू केला.

आता खोल्या कायम भरलेल्या असायच्या. हॉटेलात आता सारं काही होतं– दारू, मटण, कॅबरे !

वैष्णव विलक्षण खुश होता. प्रभूच्या कृपेनं हॉटेल कायम भरलेलं राहात होतं.

काही दिवसांनी एका गिऱ्हाइकानं एका 'बेयरा'ला विचारलं, "इथं आणखी काही मिळत नाही का ?"

"आणखी काही ?" बेयरानं विचारलं.

"हेच रे–" नाकावर बोट आपटत तो म्हणाला, "रात्री टाइमपाससाठी काही ?"

"नाही साहेब, या हॉटेलात असलं काही चालत नाही." बेयरा म्हणाला.

गिऱ्हाइक तडक वैष्णवापाशी गेलं. म्हणालं. "या हॉटेलात कोण उतरेल ? इथं रात्रीच्या टाइमपासची काहीच सोय नाही."

"का ? कॅबरे आहे की साहेब," वैष्णव म्हणाला.

"कॅबरे म्हणजे लांबून झालं. एकदम जवळ पाहिजे. खोलीत."

वैष्णव पुन्हा धर्मसंकटात पडला.

दुसऱ्या दिवशी पुन्हा भगवानासमोर हजर झाला. प्रार्थना केली– "कृपानिधान, लोक आता 'बाई'ची मागणी करू लागलेले आहेत. स्त्री देह–पापाची खाण ! या पापाच्या खाणीपासून होता होईल तेवढा मी दूर राहात असतो. देवा, आता मी काय करू ?"

वैष्णवाच्या शुद्ध आत्म्यातून 'आतला आवाज' आला– "मूर्खा, अरे हा तर आदि काळापासून चालत आलेला प्रकृती आणि पुरुषाचा समागम आहे. त्यात कसलं पाप आणि कसलं पुण्य ? – चालू दे."

सगळ्या बेयऱ्यांना बोलावून घेऊन वैष्णव म्हणाला, "गुपचूप व्यवस्था करत चला. पोलिसांपासून जरा सांभाळून."

आता वैष्णवाचं हॉटेल जोरात चालू लागलेलं. दारू, मटण, कॅबरे आणि बाई. वैष्णव धर्माचं व्यवस्थित पालन होतं आहे.

इकडं हेही व्यवस्थित चालू आहे.

वैष्णवानं धर्माची आणि धंद्याची पद्धतशीर सांगड घातलेली आहे. □

विज्ञान

गुरांच्या खाण्याच्या आवडीनिवडी

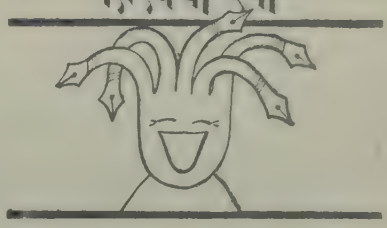
माणसाला तेच तेच अन्न खाऊन कंटाळा येतो. मग नानाविध पदार्थ करून जिभेचे चोचले पुरविले जातात. प्रत्येक माणसाच्या खाण्यापिण्याच्या विशिष्ट आवडीनिवडी असतात. गुरांमध्येही आता हे खाण्याच्या आवडी निवडीचे फॅड पोहोचले आहे. कुराणात चरावयास जाणाऱ्या गुरांना गवताच्या निवडीबाबत अधिक जास्त प्रमाणात संधी उपलब्ध होते. पशुसंशोधनविषयक– शास्त्रज्ञांनी ७५ विविध जातींच्या जादा उत्पन्न घेणाऱ्या गवताबाबत असा प्रयोग केला. एका विशिष्ट ठिकाणी ह्यातील निवडक ५० जातीच्या गवतांची लागवड करून ते वाढविण्यात आले. नंतर ह्या ठिकाणी विविध जातीची गुरे चरण्यासाठी पाठविण्यात आली. त्यांच्या गवत चरण्याबाबत नंतर शास्त्रज्ञांनी पाहणी केली तेव्हा त्यांना आश्चर्याचा धक्का बसला. सर्व गुरांनी प्रथम प्रत्येक जातीच्या गवताचा थोडा थोडा आस्वाद घेऊन नंतर त्या गुरांनी आपला मेनू निश्चित केला. त्यानुसार विशिष्ट आवडलेल्या जातीच्या गवतावर त्यांनी चांगला ताव मारला होता. एकूण ७५ जातींपैकी फक्त १२ जातींचे गवत गुरांना पसंत पडले होते.

गाई-बैल तसेच इतर दुभती जनावरे ही एक प्रकारची राष्ट्रीय संपत्तीच असते. डेन्मार्क, नार्वे या देशांची अर्थव्यवस्था तर बहुतांशी दुभत्या जनावरांशी निगडीत आहे. भारतासारख्या कृषिप्रधान देशात जनावरांना महत्त्वाचे स्थान आहे. सरकारने शेतकऱ्यांना आर्थिकदृष्ट्या स्वावलंबी करण्यासाठी दुधाचा जोडधंदा प्राप्त करून दिला आहे. त्यामुळे जनावरांचा दर्जा वाढवून दुग्ध उत्पादनात भर घालण्यासाठी जनावरांच्या आहार-विषयक आवडी निवडीबाबतच्या संशोधनाला महत्त्व आहे. जनावरांना आवडीनुसार आहार दिला तर त्यापासून मिळणारे उत्पन्नही वाढेल पण सतत त्याच प्रकारचा आहार दिला, तेच तेच गवत दिले तर गुरेही बोअर होण्याची शक्यता आहे.

– हेमंत ओक

धर्म आणि धंद्याची पद्धतशीर सांगड

तिरक्या रेषा



● मूळ लेखक :
हरिशंकर परसाई

● अनुवाद :
मुकुद टाकसाळे

वैष्णव करोडोपती आहे. कोट्यवधी रुपयांची इस्टेट आहे. भरमसाठ व्याजानं कर्ज देणं हा धंदा आहे. वैष्णव रोज दोन तास भगवान विष्णूची पूजा करतो. नंतर तक्क्यागादीच्या बैठकीवर बसून धर्माची धंद्याशी सांगड घालतो. धर्म धंद्याला जोडलेला असणं यालाच 'योग' म्हणतात. कर्ज घेणारे येतात. कर्ता-करविता भगवान विष्णू आहे. वैष्णव त्याचा मुनीम बनून कर्ज घेणाऱ्याकडून दस्तऐवज लिहून घेतो.

वैष्णवपाशी नंबर दोनचा पैसा तुडुंब झालेला आहे. असंख्य एजन्सीज घेतलेल्या आहेत. स्टॉकिस्टही आहे. इच्छेला येईल तेव्हा माल दाबून ठेवून 'ब्लॅक' करू लागतो. परंतु रोज दोन तास विष्णू-पूजा मात्र करणारच. त्यात कधी खाडा होणार नाही. प्रभूच्या कृपेनंच हे सारं चाललेलं आहे. वैष्णवाचा प्रभूही नंबर दोनचा असावा. नंबर एकचा असता तर त्यानं वैष्णवाला असं करू दिलं नसतं.

इकडं वैष्णवाला फिकीर पडलेली आहे– एवढा नंबर दोनचा पैसा गोळा झालेला आहे, त्याचं काय करायचं? पैसा आपला वाढतच चाललाय. 'ही सारी प्रभूची लीला आहे. तोच यातून मार्ग दाखवेल!'

वैष्णव एक दिवस पूजा झाल्यावर हात जोडून प्रार्थना करू लागला– "प्रभो, आपल्याच आशीर्वादानं माझ्याजवळ एवढा नंबर दोनचा पैसा जमलेला आहे. आता मी याचं काय करू? आपणच मार्ग सांगा. प्रभो, भक्ताचे कष्ट आपण हरण करता, सांगा, या पैशाचं काय करू?"

ताबडतोब वैष्णवाच्या 'शुद्ध' आत्म्यातून शब्द आले– "अधम, माया जोडली आहेस तर तिचा उपयोग करणंही शिकून घे. तू एक मोठ्ठं हॉटेल उघड. आजकाल हॉटेलचा धंदा जोरात आहे."

वैष्णवानं प्रभूची आज्ञा शिरसावंद्य मानून एक आलिशान हॉटेल उघडलं. सुसज्ज खोल्या, चकचकीत बाथरूम, खाली लॉन्ड्री, न्हाव्याचं दुकान, दारासमोर टॅक्सीज, अप्रतिम लॉन, वर टेरेस गार्डन.

पुन्हा वैष्णवासमोर धर्मसंकट उभं राहिलं. जेवण कसलं ठेवायचं? आपल्या सल्लागारांना तो म्हणाला, "मी वैष्णव आहे, शुद्ध शाकाहारी भोजन आपण ठेवू. भाजी, आमटी, रायतं, पापड वगैरे."

हॉटेलचं नाव ऐकून तिथं बडीबडी मंडळी येऊ लागली. मोठमोठ्या कंपन्यांचे एक्झिक्युटिव्ह, बडे ऑफिसर आणि मोठमोठ्ठाले शेठजी यांची एकच गर्दी होऊ लागली.

वैष्णव संतुष्ट झाला. पण त्याच्या लक्षात आलं की हॉटेलात उतरणाऱ्यांच्यात काहीतरी असमाधान आहे.

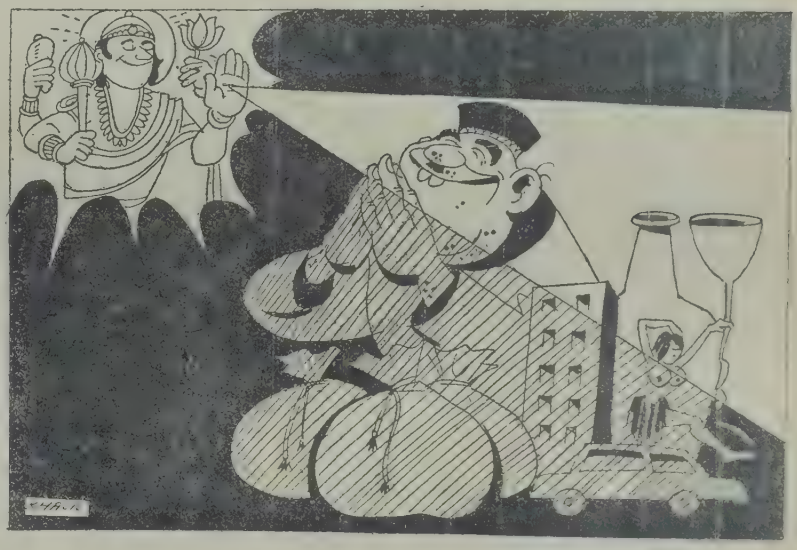
एक दिवस एका कंपनीचा एक एक्झिक्युटिव्ह मोठ्या तावातावानं वैष्णवापाशी आला. म्हणाला, "इतक्या महागड्या हॉटेलात आम्ही हा झाड-पाला खायसाठी उतरतो? इथं 'नॉनव्हेज'ची सोय का नाही करत?"

"मी वैष्णव आहे. मी माझ्या हॉटेलात मांस-मटण कसं सुरू करू?" नम्रपणे वैष्णव म्हणाला.

"एवढा वैष्णव आहेस तर धाबा टाकायचा! आधुनिक हॉटेल कशाला उघडायचं? इथं या पुढं कुणी उतरायला येईल असं मला नाही वाटत."

"हे धर्मसंकट आहे. मी प्रभूला विचारीन," वैष्णव म्हणाला.

दुसऱ्या दिवशी वैष्णवानं विष्णूसमोर



साष्टांग नमस्कार घातला. म्हणाला, "प्रभो, हे हॉटेल आता साफ बसणार. उतरणारे म्हणतात, 'आम्हाला इथं चांगलं जेवण मिळत नाही.' प्रभो, माझ्याकडून मी 'वैष्णव-भोजना'ची सोय केलेली आहे. पण त्यांना मांस-मटण हवं आहे. आता मी काय करू?"

वैष्णवाच्या शुद्ध आत्म्यातून 'आतला आवाज' आला– "मूर्खा, गांधीजींहून मोठा वैष्णव या युगात कुणी झालेला आहे का? या गांधीजींचं भजन आहे– 'वैष्णव जन तो तेणे कहिए, जे पीर पराई जाणे रे.' पर-पीडा जाणतो त्यालाच वैष्णव म्हणावं. तू तुझ्या हॉटेलात राहणाऱ्यांची काय पीडा आहे ते जाणून का नाही घेत? त्यांना त्यांच्या मनासारखं जेवण मिळत नाही. त्यांची पीडा

"येईल हो. सगळ्यांच्याकडंच अंधार आहे."

ते काही गेले नाहीत. मी पुन्हा एकदा फोनचं सुचवून पाहिलं. पण त्यांनी तेच उत्तर दिलं– "सगळ्यांच्याकडंच अंधार आहे."

सगळ्यांच्या घरात अंधार आहे म्हणून त्यांच्या घरात उजेड कसा काय पडणार होता ते काही माझ्या लक्षात आलं नाही. पण ते आनंदात (आणि अंधारात) बसून होते.

असंच एकदा पावसाळ्यात समोर पाणी साठलेलं होतं. चिखलही झालेला होता. ते नेहमी म्हणायचे, "चिखल झालाय. फार त्रास होतो."

"तुम्ही तिथं थोड्या दगड-विटा का नाही टाकत?" मी सुचवलं.

त्यावर ते म्हणाले, "जाऊ द्या हो. सगळ्यांनाच त्रास आहे."

"सगळ्यांनाच त्रास आहे" या जाणिवेपोटी त्यांनी कधी तिथं दगड-विटा टाकल्या नाहीत. पाय, जोडे आणि कपडे खराब करत ते चिखलातून चालायचे. एका शेजाऱ्यानं तिथं दगड वगैरे टाकले तेव्हा त्यांची आपोआपच सोय झाली.

छोट्या-छोट्या गोष्टी आहेत. अजब माणूस होता खरा! त्याला कशाचं सोयरसुतकच नव्हतं!

एक दिवस बाहेरून आले आणि माझ्यापाशी येऊन सांगू लागले, "मला शेजाऱ्याचं कुत्रं चावलं."

"कुठं?" मी विचारलं.

"मी बाहेर निघालो होतो– एवढ्यात कुत्र्यानं झेप घेतली. एकदम पायच पकडला तोंडात. दुःखात सुख एवढंच की त्याचे दात पायाला नाही लागले. पॅण्ट मात्र फाटली. ही बघा–"

मला राग आला. मी म्हणालो, "त्या कुत्र्याबद्दल खूप तक्रारी आहेत. तुम्ही पोलिसात जाऊन रिपोर्ट करा सरळ."

"जाऊ द्या हो." त्यांनी नेहमीचा सूर लावला, "रिपोर्ट कसला करायचा? कुत्रीच ती– चावायचीच."

"पण तुमची पॅण्ट फाटलीय. तुम्ही कुत्र्याच्या मालकाकडून पॅण्टचे पैसे वसूल करा. सोडू नका–"

"कुत्रीच ती– चावायचीच" हेच त्यांनी पुन्हा मला शांतपणे ऐकवलं.

एक दिवस त्यांची मुलगी संध्याकाळी लवकर घरी परतली नाही. तिची आई अगदी हैराण झाली होती. ते मात्र गंभीर होते. त्यांची पत्नी त्यांना सारखी म्हणत होती– "अहो, बघून तरी या बाहेर. अंधार किती पडलाय. त्यातून दिवस हे असे."

"चालायचंच. सगळ्यांनाच तसे दिवस आहेत." ते म्हणाले.

थोड्या वेळानंतर मुलगी आली. मला वाटलं, ते तिला आता चांगलो फैलावर घेणार.

"बेबी, तू अलीकडं फारच त्रास द्यायला लागली आहेस." ते म्हणाले. आणि लगेचच त्यांनी त्यांच्या खास ढंगात पुस्ती जोडली, "हंऽऽऽ चालायचंच. अलीकडच्या सगळ्याच बेब्या अशा त्रास देतात म्हणा."

–संपलं! एवढंच!

एक दिवस मी त्यांना म्हणालो, "सरकार म्हणे महागाई भत्त्याचा हा हप्ता देणार नाहीत."

"हंऽऽ जे सगळ्यांचं होईल ते आपलं होईल."

"तुम्ही लोक काही करणार नाही का?"

"काय करायचं हो? देणारं सरकार आहे. आपण आपले घेणार. दिला सरकारनं तर घ्यायचा– नाहीतर राह्यलं."

काही दिवसांनी संपाची घोषणा झाली. मी त्यांना विचारलं, "उद्या तुमच्याकडं संप आहे. कामावर जाणार नसाल उद्या तुम्ही."

ते म्हणाले, "मी आपला कामावर जाणार बुवा."

"का? संपात भाग घेणार नाही का?"

"सगळे जातायतच संपावर. मी नाही गेलो म्हणून काय बिघडणार आहे?" हे त्यांचं उत्तर!

"तुम्ही महागाई भत्ता घेणार नाही तर?" मी विचारलं.

"आता सगळ्यांना मिळाल्यावर मलाही मिळणारच की."

विचित्र माणूस होता. कोणत्याही परिस्थितीत स्वतःचो पद्धतशीर सुटका करून घ्यायचा.

प्रत्येक वेळी त्यांना तटस्थ राहाणं चांगलं जमायचं. निवडणुकीच्या काळातलो गोष्ट. माझ्यापाशी त्यांच्याखेरीज आणखी दोन माणसं बसलेली होतो. आम्ही राजकीय पक्षांबाबत, उमेदवारांबाबत बोलत होतो. त्यांच्या गुणदोषांची चर्चा चाललेली होती.

एकजण म्हणाला, "यावेळी जनता पक्ष नक्की जिंकणार."

दुसरा म्हणाला, "छे छे– काहीही झालं तरी काँग्रेस जिंकणार अशी स्पष्ट चिन्हं दिसताहेत."

ते गृहस्थ शांतपणे म्हणाले, "अहो, दोघांच्यात लढत आहे म्हटल्यावर कुणीतरी एकजण जिंकणार झालं."

"पण तुम्हाला कोणता राजकीय पक्ष पसंत आहे?" मी विचारलं.

"आपल्याला काय– दोन्ही पक्ष सारखेच!"

"मग तुम्ही मत कुणाला देणार?"

"मी मतदानालाच जाणार नाही. सगळेच मत देणार. मग मी द्यायची काय जरुरी आहे?"

"म्हणजे तुम्हाला कोणतंही सरकार चालेल."

"आपल्याला काय– सगळी सरकारं सारखीच!"

असा हा माणूस! त्यांच्या किती गोष्टी आठवाव्यात!

आज सकाळी ते मेले. मरण्याअगोदर जरा शुद्धीवर आले होते. डोळे उघडून त्यांनी इकडं-तिकडं बघितलं. मग क्षीण आवाजात म्हणाले, "चालायचंच. मरण कोणाला चुकलंय? सगळेचजण मरतात."

आणि मेले.

जसजसा विचार करावा तसतसं वाटतं– काय माणूस होता! कधी कशाला विरोध केला नाही. कधी ताठ मानेनं उभाच राहिला नाही. मुंगीलाही सांभाळून घेत जन्मभर चालला. येईल त्या परिस्थितीचा निमुटपणे स्वीकार केला– कुठलीही तक्रार न करता. 'अमुक एक गोष्ट सहन करणं शक्य नाही' असं कधी त्याच्या बाबतीत झालंच नाही.

जळती मशाल जरी त्याच्या जवळ नेली तरी ती विझून जाईल असा हा माणूस!

हाच विषय डोक्यात असताना शेजारचा एक मित्र आला. तोही त्या मृत व्यक्तिबद्दलच विचार करत होता.

म्हणाला, "वा! काय माणूस होता! माझं तर मत आहे– संत होता तो."

मी काहीही बोललो नाही.

मित्रानं परत विचारलं, "खरं की नाही? तुमचं काय मत आहे?"

मी बोललो नाही. विचार करत होतो.

"होय हो? तुमचं मत सांगा ना– काय माणूस होता!" मित्रानं पुन्हा विचारलं.

त्याच वेळी माझ्या पायाला काहीतरी गिळगिळीत लागलं. मी जोरात पाय झटकला.

"काय?" मित्राचा तोच प्रश्न पुन्हा आला.

"गांडुळ!" मी ताबडतोब उत्तर दिलं.

□□

सकाळीच त्यांचा मृत्यू झाला. रविवारचा सुट्टीचा दिवस गाठून त्यांनी राम म्हटला. पाऊस चालू आहेच, पण नेमकी उघडिप असताना ते मेले. सकाळी मेले त्यामुळं तीनचार तासातच त्यांना फुंकून टाकलं. रात्री मेले असते तर पंचाईतच. एकतर सगळ्यांनाच जागरण झालं असतं आणि शिवाय बायकांना आणखी रडारड करावी लागली असती ती वेगळीच. हार्टफेलनं एकदम गेले. त्यामुळं त्यांची सेवा-सुश्रुषा करत बसण्याची वेळ कुणावर आली नाही. शनिवारीच पगार घेतलेला होता. तेव्हा 'क्रियाकर्माच्या खर्चासाठी पैसे नाहीत' असं काही झालं नाही. मृत्युपत्र करुन मेले– म्हणजे पुन्हा त्यावरून कुटुंबात भांडणतंटा होण्याचा प्रश्न उरला नाही.

जसे जगले, तसेच मेले.

संध्याकाळी वऱ्हांड्यात बसलेलो आहे आणि त्यांच्याबद्दलचेच विचार माझ्या डोक्यात घोळताहेत. कितीतरी गोष्टी आठवताहेत.

माझ्या वऱ्हांड्यातून त्यांच्या घराचा जिना दिसतो. मी त्यांना बऱ्याच वेळा जिन्यावरून चढ-उतार करताना पाहायचो. अगदी हलक्या पावलांनी हळूहळू ते जिना चढा-उतरायचे. जिन्याच्या पायरीवर फार जोर पडणार नाही, तिला धक्का लागणार नाही असं यांचं चालणं. चाहुलसुद्धा लागायची नाही कधी. बघणाऱ्याला वाटावं हे गृहस्थ स्वत:च्याच घरात चोरी करायसाठी घुसताहेत की काय! जिन्याच्या प्रत्येक पायरीची जणू ते क्षमा-याचना करायचे– 'माफ करा हं... मला तुमच्यावर पाय ठेवणं भागच पडतंय. माझा अगदी नाईलाजच आहे. घरात तर मला जायलाच पाहिजे, नाही का?'

जिन्याजवळची जागा लहान आहे. कधीकधी जिन्यापाशी तीन-चार सायकली लावलेल्या असायच्या. पण त्यांनी कधी सायकली बाजूला काढून रस्ता करवून घेतल्याचं आठवत नाही. एकाही सायकलला स्पर्श न करता सतरा ठिकाणी अंग लचकवून मोठ्या लवचिकपणे सायकलींमधून निसटून जायचं त्यांचं कौशल्य वाखाणण्याजोगं होतं.

मी वऱ्हांड्यात बसलेलो असलो तर ते मला नमस्ते करायचे. अत्यंत सावकाश एक हात अर्ध्यावर उचलून ते अत्यंत हळू आवाजात 'नमस्ते' पुटपुटायचे. त्यांचा हात खाली पडल्यावर मला त्यातलं 'ते.' च तेवढं ऐकू यायचं. ते जिन्याच्या पहिल्या पायरीवर पाऊल ठेवायचे तेव्हा त्यांचा हात मला खाली पडताना दिसायचा आणि कानावर 'ते' पडायचं. कधीही झटझटून दोन्ही हात जोडून त्यांनी उत्साहानं 'नमस्ते' म्हटलं नाही. तसं त्यांनी केल्यास मी घाईघाईनं झटकन हात जोडीन अशी त्यांना भीती वाटत होती आणि मला हे श्रम पडावेत अशी त्यांची इच्छा नव्हती. कधी मी त्यांच्याअगोदर जोरात नमस्ते केलं तर ते एकदम थबकायचे. क्षणभर परिस्थितीचा अंदाज घ्यायचे मग मेंगळटपणे हात अर्ध्यावर उचलून 'ते' करायचे आणि जिन्यावर पाऊल ठेवायचे.

कधी ते माझ्यापाशी येऊन दोन मिनिटं बसायचे. मला आठवतंय: असेच एकदा ते बसलेले होते. माझ्या खूपच झाल्या होत्या. मी हातातल्या पेपरानं जोरजोरात माझ्या उडवत होतो. त्यांच्या नाकावर दोन माश्या बसल्याचं मी बराच वेळ बघत होतो. खूप

तिरक्या रेषा

● मूळ लेखक
हरिशंकर परसाई

● अनुवाद
मुकुंद टाकसाळे



उशिरानं त्यांनी (अखेर एकदाचा) हात संथपणे वर नेला आणि माश्या हाकलल्या. हे करताना जणू ते माश्यांची माफीच मागत होते– 'माफ करा, तुम्हांला तसदी देण्याचा माझा बिल्कुल हेतू नव्हता. पण आता तुम्ही माझ्या नाकावरच बसलेल्या आहात. जरा बाजूला हटाल तर बरं. वाटल्यास परत येऊन बसा. नाकातुमचंच आहे.

एके दिवशी संध्याकाळी वीज गेली. मी मेणबत्ती लावून बसलेलो होतो. ते येऊन बसले. मी म्हणालो, "वीज गेलीय."

"हो ना– सगळीकडं अगदी अंधार झालाय." ते म्हणाले.

"माझी आज तब्येत बरी नाही. तुम्ही असं करता का? समोरच्या घरातून फोन करा. लगेच वीज येईल."

तो कोण होता?

सत्ता या लेखणीवर बलात्कार करते– पण त्याची आम्हांला दाद ना फिर्याद! अनेक नीच लोकांची स्तुती-स्तोत्रं मी गायलेली नाहीत? अनेक खोट्या गोष्टींचा प्रचार मी केलेला नाही? वृत्तपत्रांच्या मालकांचा चेहरा बघून माझ्या 'सत्या'नं कित्येकदा आपली रूपं बदललेली आहेत. कुणी यावं आणि माझ्याकडून सिनेमाचे हवे तसे डायलॉग लिहून घ्यावेत! याच लेखणीनं मी बलात्काराची प्रशंसा करणारं फिल्मी गीत लिहू शकतो आणि देशाचं भजनही लिहू शकतो. आज पैसे देऊन माझ्याकडून मजूर-विरोधी वृत्तपत्राचं संपादन करून घ्यावं. उद्या त्यापेक्षा जास्त पैसे मिळाले तर मी ट्रेड युनियनच्या वृत्तपत्राचं संपादन करीन. याच लेखणीनं मी पूर्वी 'इंदिरा गांधी जिंदाबाद' लिहिलं होतं, नंतर 'इंदिरा गांधी मुर्दाबाद' लिहिलं. आणि आता परत 'इंदिरा म्हणजेच भारत' हे लिहितो आहे.

काय आमचं 'पावित्र्य' आहे? साहित्य-भवनाच्या पावित्र्याला सिनेमा-थिएटर काय नष्ट करणार? पण पावित्र्य, सभ्यता, चारित्र्य याचाही एक ताठा असतो. इथंच एका गल्लीत एक सिनेमा थिएटर बांधायचं चाललेलं होतं तर सभ्य लोकांनी एकच हल्लकल्लोळ माजवला– 'ही सभ्य लोकांची वस्ती आहे. इथं कुलीन बायका राहातात. आणि इथं सिनेमा थिएटर बांधायला निघालेत!' जणू काय सिनेमा थिएटर हे गुंडांच्याच वस्तीत उभं राहिलं पहिजे! म्हणजे यांच्या घरातल्या कुलीन बायकांना जर सिनेमा बघायचा असेल तर तो त्यांनी गुंडांमध्ये जाऊनच बघावा! याच गल्लीत एक माणूस राहतो. त्याला भेटायला एक बाई येत असते. एक सज्जन म्हणू लागले, "ही सभ्य लोकांची वस्ती आहे. इथं हे असले प्रकार होता कामा नये. बघा, बघा, त्या फलाण्या गृहस्थांकडं एक बाई येत असते." मी त्यांना म्हणालो, "साहेब, सभ्य लोकांची वस्ती आहे म्हणून तर ती बाई बेधडकपणे आपल्या पुरुष मित्राला भेटायला इथं येते आहे. हीच जर गुंडांची वस्ती असती तर तिची काय बिशाद होती त्याला भेटायला येण्याची?'

'पावित्र्या'बाबत अशी परिस्थिती आहे की जेव्हा एखाद्या देवळाशेजारील दारूचं दुकान हटवा अशी मागणी लोक करतात, तेव्हा पुजाऱ्याला त्याचं दुःख सगळ्यांत जास्त होतं. त्याला 'घ्यायची' झाल्यास लांब जावं लागेल ना. शिवाय इथं दुकानदार भक्ति-भावापोटी कधीकधी त्याला फुकटही पाजत असतो.

संध्याकाळच्या पत्त्यामुळं मला जरा हलकं वाटायला लागलं. पावित्र्याची माझी नशा साफ उतरली. मला असं वाटायला लागलं, साहित्य-भवनाच्या सचिवाला एक पत्र लिहून टाकावं की– 'तुमच्या विरोधी बाजूच्या लोकांचं पत्र मला मिळालं. त्यात त्यांनी आपल्या संस्थेत किती भ्रष्टाचार आहे हे तपशिलवार सांगितलेलं आहे. आता खरं तर सिनेमा थिएटरच्याच मालकानं मागणी करायला हवी की ही साहित्य-संस्था इथून दुसरीकडं हटवा. आमच्या प्रेक्षकांच्या नीति-मत्तेवर तिचा वाईट परिणाम घडायला नको. तिच्यात फार मोठा भ्रष्टाचार आहे.'

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सकाळच्या डाकेला एक पत्र आलं. दिवसभर मी नुसता हवेत होतो. त्या पत्रामुळं माझ्या लक्षात आलेलं होतं की मी एक पवित्र माणूस आहे कारण साहित्याचं काम हे एक पवित्र काम आहे. दिवसभर जो कुणी भेटेल त्याला मी तुच्छ समजत होतो. मी प्रत्येक माणसाला अपवित्र मानून त्याच्यापासून दूर राहात होतो. 'पावित्र्य' ही अशी घाबरट वस्तू आहे जी सगळ्यांना सारखी घाबरते आणि सगळ्यांपासून स्वतःचं रक्षण करण्यासाठी सारखी जागरूक असते. 'आपण पवित्र आहोत' ही जाणीव माणसाला इतकी मदोन्मोत्त बनवते की तो उधळलेल्या बैलाप्रमाणे लोकांना शिंग मारत सुटतो, रस्त्यावरच्या हातगाड्या उलटवतो, लहान पोरांना तुडवतो. पावित्र्याच्या भावनेनं भारावलेला लेखक म्हणजे पावलाला घुंगरू बांधलेला मोरच जणू ! तो म्हणजे घाणेरड्या डबक्याजवळील दुकानात ठेवलेली उत्तराची बंदिस्त कुपीच ! हे अत्तर तिथल्या घाणीला इतकं घाबरत असतं की कुपीत बंद राहणंच त्याला बरं वाटतं.

ते पत्र एका प्रसिद्ध साहित्य-संस्थेच्या सचिवांकडून आलेलं होतं. मला त्या संस्थेचं —ज्या संस्थेचा लाखांचा व्यवहार आहे— सभासद करवून घेण्यात आलेलं आहे. मी स्थायी समितीचा सभासद आहे. ही संस्था आम्हा लोकांना बैठकींना हजर राहण्याचा खर्च देत नाही. कारण उघड आहे. तिथला पैसा हा साहित्याच्या पवित्र कामात कार्यरत असणाऱ्या पवित्र पदाधिकाऱ्यांकडून हडप होण्यातच खर्ची पडत असतो. सचिव पत्रात म्हणतात,'साहित्य-भवनासमोरच एका सिनेमा थिएटरला मंजुरी मिळालेली आहे. सिनेमा थिएटर जर साहित्य भवनासमोरच उभं राहिलं तर साहित्य भवनाचं पावित्र्य आणि शांती भंग होईल. वातावरण दूषित होईल. आम्ही मुख्यमंत्र्यांकडे 'हे थिएटर होऊ नये' यासाठी एक अर्ज देतो आहोत. आपण त्यावर आपली सही करावी.'

या पत्रावरून मला बोध झाला तो असा की साहित्य पवित्र आहे, आम्ही साहित्यिक पवित्र आहोत आणि ही संस्था पवित्र आहे. माझ्या मनात एक दुष्ट शंका आली. एखाद्या पैसेवाल्यानं—ज्याला त्या जागेत स्वतःचं दुकान टाकण्याची इच्छा आहे अशा मालदार माणसानं त्या जागेत सिनेमा थिएटर होऊ नये यासाठी आमच्या पवित्र साहित्याच्या पवित्र सचिवाला पैसे तर खायला घातले नसतील ? घातलेही असतील, सांगता येत नाही. पण मी ही दुष्ट शंका मनातल्या मनात दाबून टाकली. छे—छे ! भलतंच काय ? साहित्य-संस्था पवित्र आहे, सिनेमा थिएटर अपवित्र आहे. आपल्याला अशा अपवित्र गोष्टींचा वाराही लागता कामा नये.

संस्थेच्या विरुद्ध जो गट होता त्याच्या प्रमुखाचं संध्याकाळच्या डाकेनं पत्र आलं. त्यात त्यानं संस्थेत चाललेल्या भ्रष्टाचाराचा इत्थंभूत वृत्तांत सादर केलेला होता.

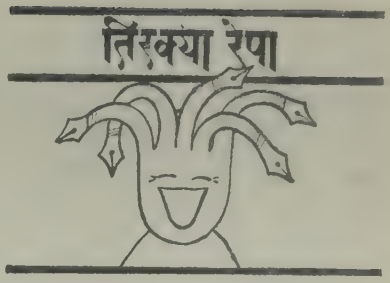
या पत्रानं एका झटक्यात मला जागेवर आणलं. मला मी पवित्र आहे की काय अशी शंका निर्माण झालेली होती. साहित्याचं काम पवित्र आहे अशीही शंका निर्माण झालेली होती. माझ्या स्वतःच्या आणि साहित्य-संस्थेच्या पावित्र्याबद्दल माझ्या मनात जे वादळ उठलेलं होतं ते त्या पत्रानं शांत झालं आणि मी एकदम नॉर्मलवर आलो.

पावित्र्याचा झटका...



सभ्य लोकांच्या वस्तीत असली बाअी येते म्हणजे काय ?

साहित्याच्या क्षेत्रात आता इतकी वर्षं काढली. 'पवित्र' होण्याच्या दुर्घटनेत अनेकदा सापडतोय की काय अशी भीती निर्माण झालेली होती. पण प्रत्येकवेळी मी त्यातून सहीसलामत सुटलो. मी लिहायला सुरुवात करून फार दिवस झाले नव्हते. त्या काळात एक बुजुर्ग साहित्यिक मला म्हणायचे, 'तुम्ही साहित्य लेखनाचं महान कार्य आपल्या हाती घेतलेलं आहे. माता वीणा-वादिनी सरस्वतीच्या मंदिराचं पावित्र्य राखा.' मी थोडा फुलून जायचो. वाटायचं, सिग्रेट पिणं सोडून



० मूळ लेखक

हरिशंकर परसाई

० अनुवाद :

मुकुंद टाकसाळे

द्यावं. सिग्रेटच्या धुरामुळं देवीच्या मंदिरातला धुपाचा आणि उदबत्तीचा वास मारला जाऊ नये हा त्यामागचा उदात्त हेतू. पण त्या प्रकारातून मी बाहेर आलो. ते बुजुर्ग म्हणायचे, 'सरस्वती मातेनं तुमच्यापुढं पदर पसरलेला आहे. तो मौक्तिक मण्यांनी भरून टाका.' बरोबर आहे, सरस्वती मातेच्या पदरात तुम्ही कचरा टाकत राहा आणि मी मात्र मौक्तिक मणी टाकत राहतो. हे पवित्र लोक आणि फक्त पवित्रच लिहिणारे लोक मोठे मजेदार असतात. एकजण मला वारंवार म्हणायचे, "आता तुम्ही काहीतरी शाश्वत साहित्य लिहायला घ्या— मी तर आपला नेहमी शाश्वत साहित्यच लिहितो." ते मटक्याचा आकडा रोज नवा लावायचे, पण साहित्य मात्र शाश्वतच लिहायचे. ते मला मुंग्यांच्या वारूळात गाडल्या गेलेल्या वाल्मिकीसारखे वाटायचे. शाश्वत साहित्य लिहायचा संकल्प सोडून लिहायला बसणारे मी नावडतीच मरताना बघितलेले आहेत. अशाच एका शाश्वत साहित्य लिहिणाऱ्यानं काही वर्षांपूर्वी मला म्हटलं होतं— 'अरे ! तुम्ही शाळेत मास्तर असूनसुद्धा इतकं चांगलं लिहिता ! मला तर वाटलं होतं, तुम्ही प्रोफेसर असाल म्हणून.' शाळा-मास्तर लेखकाची त्यांनी सदैव उपेक्षा केली. ते स्वतः प्रोफेसर होते. पण पुढं त्यांचं दुर्दैव असं की, अभ्यासक्रमात 'लावलेल्या' माझ्याच साहित्य-कृती कॉलेजच्या वर्गात शिकवण्याचं त्यांच्या नशिबी आलं. त्यांचं शाश्वत साहित्य काही कॉलेजच्या अभ्यासक्रमात लावलं गेलं नाही.

मला असं वाटतं, आम्ही कसले आलोय पवित्र ? आमच्यापैकी बहुतांशी लेखकांनी आपल्या लेखणीला पैसा देईल त्याच्याबरोबर झोपणाऱ्या रांडेचा अवकळा आणलेली आहे.

त्यांनी अशाच एका दुकानावर छापा मारून वीस-पंचवीस अश्लील पुस्तकं ताब्यात घेतली. प्रत्येकाजवळ दोन-तीन पुस्तकं होती. त्यांचा नेता म्हणाला, "आजतर आता उशीर झालेला आहे. उद्या वर्तमानपत्रांना व्यवस्थित कळवून मग परवा आपण कुठल्यातरी सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी या पुस्तकांची होळी करू. वर्तमानपत्रातून प्रसिद्धी मिळाल्यानं इतर लोकांवरही त्याचा परिणाम होईल. उद्या संध्याकाळी सगळेजण माझ्या घरी जमा या. एवढी सगळी पुस्तकं मी आत्ता काही घरी घेऊन जाऊ शकत नाही. नाही म्हटलं तरी ती वीस पंचवीस आहेत. घरी वडील आहेत, काका आहेत. त्यांनी बघितली तर आफत यायची. तुम्ही प्रत्येकजण दोन-तीन पुस्तकं लपवून घरी न्या आणि उद्या संध्याकाळी घेऊन या.

दुसऱ्या दिवशी संध्याकाळी सगळेजण एकत्र जमले, पण पुस्तकं काही कुणी आणली नाहीत. नेता म्हणाला, "पुस्तकं इकडं आणा. मी या पोत्यात लपवून ठेवतो. उद्या होळीच्या ठिकाणी पोतं घेऊन जाऊ."

एक पुस्तकसुद्धा समोर आलं नाही.

एकजण म्हणाला, "उद्या नको, परवा जाळू, जरा वाचून तर बघू."

दुसरा म्हणाला, "अजून आमची वाचून व्हायची आहेत. दोन-तीन दिवसांनंतर जाळू. नाहीतरी आता जप्त केलेली आहेतच ती."

त्या दिवशी जाळण्याच्या कार्यक्रमाचं नक्की काही ठरलं नाही. तिसऱ्या दिवशी पुस्तकं घेऊन एकत्र जमण्याचं ठरलं.

तिसऱ्या दिवशीसुद्धा कुणी पुस्तकं आणली नाहीत.

एकजण म्हणाला, "अरे यार, आमच्या फादरच्या हातात पुस्तकं पडली. ते वाचताहेत आता."

दुसरा म्हणाला, "काकांचं वाचून झालं की आणतो."

तिसरा म्हणाला, "वहिनी उचलून घेऊन गेली. म्हणाली दोन-तीन दिवसांनी वाचून परत करीन."

चौथा म्हणाला, "अरे, शेजारच्या काकी माझ्या गैरहजेरीत पुस्तक उचलून घेऊन गेल्या. त्यांचं वाचून झालं की दोन-तीन दिवसांत जाळून टाकू."

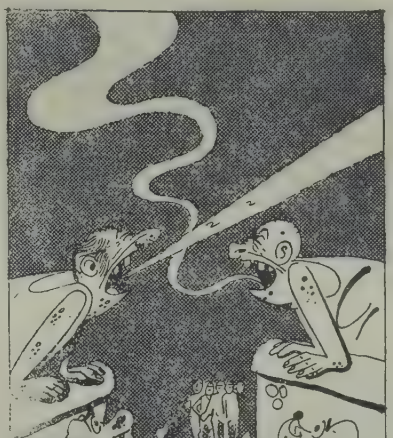
अश्लील पुस्तकं कधीच जाळली गेली नाहीत. ती आता अधिक पद्धतशीरपणे वाचली जात आहेत.

भांडण

चोपडासाहेब आणि साहनीसाहेब यांचे बंगले एकमेकाला अगदी लागूनच होते. मध्ये एक भिंतच फक्त. दोघांनी एकेक कुत्रा पाळलेला होता. दोन्ही कुत्री भयंकर होती. गल्लीतली माणसं बिचारी घाबरत घाबरत रस्त्याच्या दुसऱ्या बाजूनं निघून जायची.

खरं तर चोपडासाहेब आणि साहनीसाहेब यांचा स्वभाव आणि व्यक्तिमत्त्वच असं काही होतं की वेगळी कुत्री ठेवण्याची त्यांना जरूरच पडू नये. त्यांचे तेच स्वतःला पुरेसे होते.

एक दिवस चोपडासाहेबांचं कुत्रं साहनीसाहेबांच्या आवारात घुसलं की साहनीसाहेबांचं चोपडासाहेबांच्या घुसलं ते नेमकं सांगता येत नाही– पण कुणाचं तरी कुत्रं कुणाच्या तरी आवारात घुसलं– आणि रस्त्यावर त्या कुत्र्यांचं भांडण सुरू झालं.



चोपडासाहेब आणि साहनीसाहेब ताबडतोब रस्त्यावर आले. पहिल्यांदा त्यांनी आपापली कुत्री बाजूला काढली. कुत्री आपापल्या मालकांच्या पायांत घुटमळू लागली.

चोपडा म्हणाला, "दहादा सांगितलं असेल कुत्र्याला संभाळा म्हणून."

साहनी म्हणाला, "तू स्वतःच कुत्रं संभाळ ना, तेच आमच्या आवारात घुसलं होतं. कुठलं चोराच्या जातीचं कुत्रं आहे कुणास ठाऊक?"

"तुझंच कुत्रं चोराच्या जातीचं आहे."

"–तू, तू स्वतःच चोर आहेस आणि कुत्रंही त्याच जातीचं आहे. जसा मालक तसं त्याचं कुत्रं!"

"–चोर तू आहेस तू! पी. डब्ल्यू. डी.च्या कंत्राटदारांकडून पैसे खाऊन बंगला उठवलायस स्वतःचा!"

"–तू चारशेवीस आहेस. स्मगलिंग करून वर रूबाब करतोयस!"

दोन्ही कुत्री आपापल्या मालकांच्या पायांना बिलगून त्यांना प्रोत्साहन देत होती.

"–सांगून ठेवतोय, जर पुन्हा इकडं तुझं कुत्रं आलं तर गोळी घालीन."

"–आणि तुझं कुत्रं जर माझ्यातिकडं आलं तर मीही त्याला गोळी घालीन आणि तुलाही घालीन."

तिथं गर्दी जमली होती.

रस्त्यावरून जाणाऱ्या एका माणसानं दुसऱ्या माणसाला विचारलं, "काय हो? काय प्रकार आहे?"

दुसऱ्या माणसानं उत्तर दिलं– "काही नाही हो, कुत्र्यांचं भांडण चाललंय!"

यस सर

एक बऱ्यापैकी लेखक होते. ते राजधानीच्या गावी गेले. तिथं एका समारंभात त्यांची आणि मुख्यमंत्र्यांची गाठ पडली. मुख्यमंत्र्यांशी त्यांची अगोदरपासून ओळख होतीच. मुख्यमंत्र्यांनी त्यांना विचारलं, "काय सगळं ठीक चाललंय ना?"

"ठीक चाल्लंय. पण...."

"पण काय? काही अडचण असेल तर तसं सांगा."

"अडचण म्हणजे... तशी किरकोळ आहे. जागा मिळत नाही. एखादी चांगली जागा मिळाली, तर लेखन-वाचन जरा तब्येतीत होईल," लेखक महोदय म्हणाले.

"मी चीफ सेक्रेटरीला सांगतो. तुम्हांला घर 'अॅलॉट' होईल."

मुख्यमंत्र्यांनी चीफ सेक्रेटरीला सांगितलं– "अमुक अमुक लेखकाला घर 'अॅलॉट' करा–"

"यस सर!" चीफ सेक्रेटरी म्हणाला.

चीफ सेक्रेटरीनं कमिशनरला सांगितलं. कमिशनर म्हणाला, "यस सर!"

कमिशनरनं कलेक्टरला सांगितलं, "अमुक लेखकाला घर 'अॅलॉट' करा–"

"यस सर!" कलेक्टर म्हणाला.

गाजावाजा भरपूर झाला. आख्ख प्रशासन घर देण्याच्या कामाला लागलं. वर्षादीड वर्षानंतर लेखकाची पुन्हा मुख्यमंत्र्यांशी गाठभेट झाली.

"काय, आता चांगलं घर मिळालं का?" त्यांनी विचारलं.

"नाही."

"नाही? पण मी तर दुसऱ्याच दिवशी सांगितलं होतं."

"ते खरं आहे. वरपासून खालपर्यंत फक्त 'यस सर' झालं." लेखकानं सांगितलं.

वाईट चालीचा

एक वाडा होता. वाड्यात तेरा भाडेकरू राहात होते. वाड्याचे मालक चौधरीसाहेब जवळच्याच एका बंगल्यात राहात होते.

एक नवा भाडेकरू राहायला आला.तो डेप्युटी कलेक्टर होता. त्याच्या आगमनाबरोबरच गल्लीतल्या सगळ्यांना त्याचा इतिहास ठाऊक झालेला होता. पूर्वी ते ग्वाल्हेरला होते. तिथं ऑफिसामधल्या लेडी टाइपिस्टबरोबर त्यांचं काहीतरी लफडं झालेलं होतं. वर्षभर त्यांना सस्पेंडही केलेलं होतं. हे सगळं वर्तमानपत्रात छापूनही आलं होतं. प्रकरण मिटलं गेलं आणि त्यांची बदली या शहरात झाली.

डेप्युटीसाहेब या घरात राहायला येण्यापूर्वी त्यांच्या विभागाचा एक माणूस



गल्लीत येऊन 'हा साहेब व्यभिचारी, वाईट चालीचा, चारित्र्यहीन आहे. जाईल तिथं त्यानं बदमाशी केलेली आहे' हे वृत्त सांगून गेला होता. तेराही भाडेकरूंच्यात ही गोष्ट पसरायला वेळ लागला नाही.

भाडेकरू आपसांत चर्चा करायचे "ही सभ्य माणसांची वस्ती आहे. इथं हा असला माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे. चौधरीसाहेबांनी या माणसाला जागा दिली ते बरं नाही केलं."

कुणी म्हणायचं, "सगळ्यांच्या घरात लेकी–सुना आहेत आणि इथं असा हा दुराचारी माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे. सभ्य लोकांनी इथं राहायचं तरी कसं?"

आपली सगळी बित्तंबातमी इथं अगोदरच पोचलेली आहे याची डेप्युटीसाहेबांना कल्पना होती. इथं सगळे लोक आपला तिरस्कार करतात, आपल्याला बदमाश मानतात हेही त्यांना चांगलं ठाऊक होतं. त्यांना स्वतःलाही या वातावरणात अवघडल्यासारखं वाटत होतं. ते कर्मीपणाच्या भावनेनं पछाडलेले होते. खाली मान घालून बोलणं व्हायचं नाही. साधा नमस्कारसुद्धा त्यांना कुणी करत नसे.

इकडं गल्लीतले लोक आपापसांत म्हणायचे– 'सभ्य वस्तीत हा वाईट चालीचा माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे.'

डेप्युटीसाहेबांचा फक्त माझ्याशीच बोलण्या–चालण्याचा संबंध प्रस्थापित झालेला होता. माझं कुटुंब नव्हतं. मी एकटाच राहात होतो. डेप्युटीसाहेब कधीकधी माझ्याकडं येऊन बसायचे. तेही एकटेच होते. त्यांनी कुटुंब आणलेलं नव्हतं.

एक दिवस ते मला म्हणाले, "हे दास आहेत ना, ते रेल्वेच्या दुसऱ्या पुलाजवळील एका बाईकडं जात असतात. अगदी वाईट चालीची बाई आहे ती!"

दुसऱ्या दिवशी मी पाहिलं तर त्यांची मान थोडीशी ताठ झालेली होती.

गल्लीतले लोक आपापसांत बोलतच होते– 'सभ्य वस्तीत हा वाईट चालीचा माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे.'

दोनतीन दिवसानंतर डेप्युटीसाहेब मला म्हणाले, "आपल्या इथल्या चोपडाबाईंचा इतिहास तुम्हांला ठाऊक आहे का? या बाईचं लग्न कसं झालं माहित्येय? तिघांबरोबर भानगड होती. मग पोट पुढं आलं. बाकीचे दोघे लग्न झालेले होते. मग चोपडालाच हिच्याबरोबर लग्न करावं लागलं."

दुसऱ्या दिवशी डेप्युटीसाहेबांची मान आणखी थोडी उंच झाली.

गल्लीतले मात्र अजूनही म्हणत होते– 'सभ्य वस्तीत कसला वाईट चालीचा माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे.'

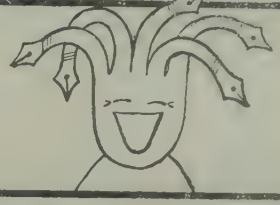
तीनचार दिवसानंतर पुन्हा डेप्युटीसाहेब म्हणाले, "श्रीवास्तवसाहेबांची मुलगी अगदीच वाया गेलीय हो! ग्रीन हॉटेलात एकाबरोबर सापडली."

डेप्युटीसाहेबांची मान आणखी उंच झाली.

इकडं गल्लीवाल्यांची कुजबूज चालूच– 'सभ्य वस्तीत हा कसला वाईट चालीचा माणूस राहायला आलेला आहे.'

तीनचार दिवसानंतर डेप्युटी म्हणाले, "ह्या पाण्डेचे त्याच्या थोरल्या भावाच्या बायकोबरोबर संबंध आहेत. सिव्हिल लाइन्समध्ये राहातो हा भाऊ."

तिरक्या रेषा



० मूळ लेखक

हरिशंकर परसाई

० अनुवाद

मुकुंद टाकसाळे

डेप्युटीसाहेबांची मान आणखी उंच झालेली होती.

गल्लीतले लोक मात्र अजूनही म्हणत होते– 'सभ्य लोकांच्या वस्तीत हा वाईट चालीचा माणूस कुठून टपकला!'

अशा रीतीनं डेप्युटीसाहेबांनी गल्लीतल्या जवळजवळ प्रत्येकाबद्दल काही ना काही माहिती काढलेली होती. हे सगळं खरं होतं का ते बनवून सांगत होते ते मला ठाऊक नाही. पण माणूस वस्ताद खरा! अत्यंत कल्पक कलाकार! जेव्हा जेव्हा ते एखाद्याच्या वाईट चालचलवणुकीची बातमी द्यायचे तेव्हा तेव्हा त्यांची मान आणखी आणखी उंच व्हायची.

आता डेप्युटीसाहेबांची मान पूर्ण ताठ झाली होती. त्यांच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वात एक 'आखूडपणा' आला होता. लोक त्यांना नमस्कारही करू लागले होते. काहीजण त्यांच्याशी बोलायलादेखील लागले होते.

एक दिवस मी त्यांना म्हणालो, "आता बायका–पोरांना घेऊन या. एकट राहायचं म्हणजे त्रासच नाही का?"

डेप्युटीसाहेब यावर म्हणाले, "अहो साहेब, बायका मुलं आणायची तर सभ्य वस्तीत घर तर मिळायला हवं!"

अश्लील पुस्तके

अश्लील साहित्याचा अगदी सुळसुळाट झालेला आहे अशी शहरात ओरड होती. रस्त्यावर खुल्लमखुल्ला अश्लील पुस्तकं विकली जातात अशा बातम्या आणि त्यावरची वाचकांची पत्रं वर्तमानपत्रात छापून येत होती.

दहा-बारा उत्साही तरुण समाजसुधारक एकत्र आले. त्यांनी ठरवलं की जिथं जिथं हे असलं साहित्य दिसेल, तिथून ते सरळ उचलायचं आणि त्याची होळी पेटवायची.

उद्योग

नाना इंडस्ट्रीज

पंचवीस वर्षांची यशस्वी वाटचाल

दोन-तीन माणसे मोठ्या प्रयासाने मोटारगाडी ढकलीत असल्याचे विनोदी चित्र असलेली एक जाहिरात मराठी वृत्तपत्रांत आपण अनेकदा पाहिली असेल. कष्टाने अशी गाडी ढकलावी लागू नये म्हणून 'नाना बॅटरी चार्जर वापरा' असे सांगणारी ही जाहिरात आहे 'नाना इंडस्ट्रीज' या छोट्या कारखान्याची.

१९५८ साली नाना इंडस्ट्रीजची सुरुवात झाली ती 'हॉट ओ मॅट' या विजेवर चालणाऱ्या शेकण्याच्या पिशवीच्या निर्मितीपासून. पाणी गरम करून ते रबरी पिशवीत भरण्याची कटकट न करता, बटन दाबले की शेकायला उबदार पिशवी तयार 'हॉट ओ मॅट'ला १९६० मध्ये पारखे पारितोषिकाचा मानही मिळाला.

या नंतर इंटर्नल टेलिफोन्स म्हणजे आवारातल्या आवारात बोलण्याचे तयार केलेले फोन्स. एकाच वास्तूत लांबवर निरोप देण्यासाठी लागणारा वेळ व श्रम यांची बचत झाल्यामुळे पुण्यातील व पुण्याबाहेरील अनेक संस्थांनी हे टेलिफोन्स बसवून घेतले.

त्यानंतर सोलोनाईडस, हीटर्स, बॅटरी चार्जर्स, नव्हॅस् स्टयुमिलेटर, स्टँड-बाय बॅटरी सिस्टीम, थर्मोस्टेट, रेक्टिफायर्स अशी काही नवी उत्पादने नाना इंडस्ट्रीजने तयार केली.

आपल्या उपकरणांच्या निर्मिती-बद्दल बोलताना श्री. नाना भेडजगावकर म्हणाले, "कारखान्यातून बाहेर पडणाऱ्या प्रत्येक उत्पादित नगाचे इन्स्पेक्शन किंवा त्याची परिपूर्ण तयारी झालीच पाहिजे असा दंडक मी सतत ठेवल्यामुळे मालाचं रिजेक्शन सहसा होत नाही. हे रिजेक्शन टाळून आपल्या कामाला सतत आणि सर्वांकडून पसंती मिळत राहणं ही उद्योजकाला सतत उत्साहित करणारी, प्रोत्साहन देणारी गोष्ट आहे."

'नाना इंडस्ट्रीज' या कारखान्याला गेल्या महिन्यात पंचवीस वर्षे पूर्ण झाली.

बँकाकडून एक रुपयाचेही कर्ज न घेता केवळ स्वतःच्या कष्टावर नानांनी आपल्या कारखान्याचा व्याप बराच वाढविला आहे. त्यांच्या महत्त्वाकांक्षेची झेप नजीकच्या काळात महत्त्वपूर्ण कामगिरी बजावेल यात शंका नाही.

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बिनधास्त (पान १० वरून)

विषयावर भाषण करीत नाहीत. चर्चा करीत नाहीत. पण प्रत्यक्ष कृतीद्वारे सामाजिक बांधिलकीचा अर्थ ते स्पष्ट करीत आहेत. 'मणभर चर्चेपेक्षा कणभर काम श्रेष्ठ आहे' हे विनोबांचे उद्गार या मित्रांना खऱ्या अर्थाने समजले आहे. All for one and one for all हे त्यांचे ब्रीदवाक्य ही मुले साकार करताना बघून मन आनंदाने आणि नव्या जोमाने भरून येते.

नवनवीन मित्र येतात– निघून जातात. त्यांच्या प्रत्येक पत्रात फ्रेन्डसची विचारपूस असते. या पोरांचा हा नवीन उत्साह थोड्याच दिवसांत निघून जाईल, असे अनेकांचे मत होते. पण आज १।। वर्षानंतर तोच सुरुवातीचा उत्साह त्यांच्यामध्ये कायम आहे. हे विशेष! आज हजारांवर पुस्तके बुक बँकेत आहेत. शंभरावर सभासद पुस्तके वापरतात आणि १५ मित्र आळीपाळीने काम करतात.

व्यापक स्वरूप यावं

यात कटू अनुभवही येतात. कोणी टिंगल उडवितात. कोणी पुस्तके जमा केली नाही म्हणजे अधिक वेळ द्यावा लागतो. काही असो– विद्यार्थ्यांनी विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी चालविलेली ही योजना १।। वर्षानंतरही नियमित व चोख चालू आहे.

शाळा कॉलेज असलेल्या प्रत्येक ठिकाणी अशी योजना विद्यार्थी सुरू करू शकतील. सर्व ठिकाणी ती सुरू झाली पाहिजे. एकमेकांच्या मदतीसाठीच तर करायचं सगळं. 'माझं तू– आणि तुझं मी' एवढेच तर यात साधले आहे. या अभिनव पुस्तक चळवळीला व्यापक स्वरूप मिळावं म्हणून 'फ्रेन्डस' प्रयत्नशील आहे.

'माझी गरज आज संपली. पण याच वेळी माझ्यासारखी गरज असणाऱ्यांची मी जाणीव ठेवीन' असे मानणारा आणि त्या प्रमाणे वागणारा फ्रेन्डसमध्ये लगेच मिसळून जातो. हाच एक निकष!

यशाजी मालकर या मुलाचं काम आज छोटं आहे. पण या छोट्या कामातच इतरांना प्रेरणा देण्याचं सामर्थ्य आहे. सगळ्या महान कार्याचे असेच लहान लहान असतात, नाही?

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अविनाशचं त्या कुटुंबात येणं-जाणं होतं. त्यांना एक मुलगी होती– रजनी. अविनाशला ती फार आवडायची. अविनाशची आई एकदा एका लग्नासाठी म्हणून लखनौला गेली होती, तेव्हा तिनं रजनीला पाहिलेलं होतं. आईलाही मुलगी खूप पसंत पडली. घरी गेल्यावर ती तिवारीजींना म्हणाली, "आपल्या अविनाशसाठी तर ती मुलगी फारच चांगली आहे."

पाण्डेजी बोलणी करण्यासाठी आले. तिवारीजी त्यांना म्हणाले, "तुमची मुलगी सून करून घ्यायला आम्हांला नक्कीच आवडेल. मुलाचीही हीच इच्छा आहे. पण चालीरीतीही पाळाव्या लागणारच. बापजाद्यांपासून चालत आलेल्या पद्धती सोडून कसं चालेल? धर्माचं पालन न करणं अमंगल आहे. सांगायचा मुद्दा असा की आम्याचे पाण्डेजी चाळीस हजार द्यायला तयार आहेत. पण तुम्ही म्हणून तीस हजारावर तोडतो. तीस हजारात एक पैही कमी होणार नाही. कबूल असेल तर लग्न ठरलंच म्हणून समजा."

मुलीच्या वडिलांनी आपली एवढी ऐपत नसल्याचं सांगितलं. आपली असहाय्यता प्रकट केली आणि विनंती केली की, "रक्कम थोडी कमी करता आली तर बरं होईल." पण तिवारीजी धर्माच्या मार्गावरून बाजूला हटले नाहीत. तीस हजारावरच हटून बसले. अखेर पाण्डेजी 'पंधरा दिवसांत काय ते कळवतो' म्हणून सांगून निघून गेले.

पंधरा वीस दिवस उलटून गेले, पाण्डेजी काही आले नाहीत, त्यांनी काही कळवलंही नाही. मात्र अविनाशचं पत्र येऊन थडकलं–

'पूज्य पिताजी,

रजनीचे वडील पाण्डेजी तुम्हाला भेटले होते. तुम्ही त्यांना तीस हजार मागितले होते. तुम्ही जे केलंत ते उचितच केलंत. परंतु पाण्डेजींची आर्थिक परिस्थिती फारशी चांगली नाही. त्यांच्या मुलीचा सून म्हणून स्वीकार करताना तुम्हांला आनंदच होईल. पण स्वतःचं घर विकून वीस हजार रुपये उभे करण्याचा त्यांचा प्रयत्न चाललेला आहे. मला असं वाटलं की जर रजनीच्या वडिलांनी घर विकून तुम्हांला पैसे दिले तर त्या कुटुंबावर आकाशच कोसळल्यासारखं झालं असतं आणि रजनीवर त्याचा वाईट परिणाम झाला असता. कोणत्याही मुलीवर तसा तो होणारच. रजनीचं लग्न झालं असतं, पण पुढं जन्मभर तिनं तुमच्याकडं 'तिच्या माहेरच्या कुटुंबाचं वाटोळं करणारा नीच आणि दुष्ट माणूस' याच नजरेनं पाहिलं असतं. ती जन्मभर तुमचा द्वेष करील. मी आपला आज्ञाधारक मुलगा आहे. तुमच्याबद्दल माझ्या मनात श्रद्धा आहे. माझ्या बायकोनं तुम्हाला सदैव नीच आणि हलकट समजावं हे मला सहनच होऊ शकणार नाही. तुम्हालाही तुमचा द्वेष करणारी सून कशी आवडेल?

आणि म्हणूनच तुमच्या भल्यासाठी मी काल तिच्याकडून काहीही न घेता कोर्टात जाऊन लग्न केलं. तुम्हाला हे वाचून निश्चित आनंद होईल याची मला खात्री आहे. आपण आम्हा उभयतांना आशीर्वाद द्यावेत ही विनंती.

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गृहमंत्र्याचा पुतळा



एका राज्यातील एका शहरात लोकांवर पोलिसांनी अत्याचार केले. तेव्हा लोकांनी गृहमंत्र्याचा पुतळा जाळायचं ठरवलं.

भयानक चेहऱ्याचा प्रचंड मोठा आगडबंब पुतळा बनवण्यात आला.

पण १४४ कलम लावलं गेलं आणि जाळण्यापूर्वीच पोलिसांनी पुतळा जप्त केला.

आता पोलिसांसमोर समस्या उभी राहिली– पुतळ्याचं काय करायचं? तिथल्या एका पोलिसानं आपल्या वरच्या साहेबांना विचारलं, "साहेब, हा पुतळा इथं किती दिवस खितपत पडून ठेवायचा? याला जाळून टाकलं तर? किंवा फेकून दिलं तर?"

"शहाणा आहेस! मंत्र्याचा पुतळा आहे तो. तो आपण जाळायचा? नोकरीवर राहायचंय ना तुला?" साहेबांनी विचारलं.

दरम्यान रामलीला जवळ येऊन ठेपली होती. एका वरीष्ठ पोलीस अधिकाऱ्याच्या डोक्यात एकदम भन्नाट 'आयडिया' आली. त्यानं रामलीलावाल्यांना बोलावून घेतलं आणि तो त्यांना म्हणाला, "तुम्हाला दसऱ्याला जाळण्यासाठी रावणाचा पुतळा पाहिजे ना? हा घेऊन जा. याला फक्त नऊ डोकी कमी आहेत, ती तेवढी लावून घ्या." □

स्वर्गात नरक

शेठ मेहूमल मिलवानी भेसळ करण्यातले तज्ज्ञ होते. ते तुपात चरबी, धन्यात लीद आणि बेसन पिठात दळलेले खडे असे काही बेमालूमपणे मिसळायचे की कुणाला पत्ता लागायचा नाही. जर विष मधापेक्षा स्वस्त असतं तर मधात ते मिसळून विकायला ते जराही कचरले नसते.

पण मेहूमल शेठजी भगवद्-भक्तसुद्धा होते. पूजा-अर्चा, भजन बिजन ते जोरदार करायचे. साहजिकच ते मेल्यावर एक देवदूत आला आणि त्यांना देवलोकात घेऊन गेला.

"मेहूमल शेठजी, जवळजवळ तीन लाख तास तुम्ही माझी पूजा केलेली आहे असं रेकॉर्डवरून दिसतं," परमेश्वर म्हणाला.

"होय देवा, मी आपला निस्सीम भक्त आहे." मेहूमल म्हणाला.

"म्हणूनच आम्ही तुला स्वर्गात स्थान देत आहोत. जा– स्वर्गात अनंत काळपर्यंत सुख उपभोगा–' विधाता त्यांना म्हणाला.

मेहूमलला स्वर्गात एक सुंदर घर देण्यात आलं. उत्कृष्ट जेवण त्याला वाढण्यात आलं. त्या वासानंच त्याच्या पोटात भूक भडकली. त्यांनी एक घास उचलून तोंडात घातला आणि लगेच तो थू थू करून थुंकून टाकला. खाद्यपदार्थात कडुलिंबाची पानं मिसळलेली होती.

शेठजींनी पाण्याचा घोट घेतला तर तोंडात किडे वळवळू लागले.

रात्री जेव्हा ते मऊमऊ गादीवर झोपलेले होते, तेव्हा भिंतीतून टोकदार सळ्या बाहेर येऊन त्यांना टोचू लागल्या.

ते रात्रभर जागेच राहिले.

सकाळी ते एका अधिकाऱ्याला म्हणाले, "मला आत्ताच्या आत्ता विधात्याकडं घेऊन चल. हा कसला तुमचा स्वर्ग आहे?"

अधिकाऱ्यानं ताबडतोब उत्तर दिलं, "विधात्यानं आम्हाला स्वर्गात नरकाची भेसळ करण्याचा हुकूम दिलेला आहे."

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तुम्ही सुंदर आहात पण...

पण सुंदर चेहरा म्हणजेच सौंदर्य नव्हे, सौंदर्यासाठी हात, पाय, ओठ, त्वचा यांची काळजी घेणेही तितकेच महत्त्वाचे आहे. थंडी, उन्हात त्वचा कोरडी पडते. हातापायांवर काप्रे पडतात, पायाला भेगा पडतात, कधीकधी भेगांतून रक्त येते. वेळेवर काळजी घेतली नाही तर त्वचारोगही संभवतात. आपल्या त्वचेचे रक्षण करण्याचा अगदी सोपा उपाय "**आयुर्वेदिक**" '**अमृत मलम.**' महागड्या कोल्ड क्रिमपेक्षा जास्त परिणामकारक पण किंमत मात्र माफक. भाजणे, कापणे यावरही उपयोगी. अमृत मलम आपल्या घरी हवेच. सर्वत्र उपलब्ध.

विज्ञान



- ध्वनी नियंत्रित विमान
- अती पुरातन अवशेष

● अनिल दांडेकर

ध्वनी नियंत्रित विमान

गणकयंत्र, अत्याधुनिक इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स यंत्रणा यांचा वापर करून ध्वनीच्या वेगाने उड्डाण करणारी विमाने आता बहुतेक राष्ट्राकडे आहेत. शत्रूच्या रडारवर ओळखता येऊ नये म्हणून जमिनीपासून सहा-सातशे फुटाच्या अंतरावरून उड्डाण करून अचूक वेध घेण्यात ती विमाने यशस्वी होतात. अलिकडच्या संशोधनानुसार पायलटने दिलेल्या तोंडी आज्ञा (ध्वनी आदेश) मार्फत विमान उड्डाण करते, दूरवरच्या लक्ष्याचा अचूक वेध घेते.

अमेरिकन एअरफोर्स, नॅशनल एरोनॉटिक्स अॅंडमिनिस्ट्रेशन यांच्या संयुक्त प्रकल्पांतून अॅडव्हान्स्ड फायटर टेक्नॉलॉजी इंटिग्रेशन (A.F.T.I.) एफ–१६ या प्रकारचे लढाऊ विमान तयार करून कल्पकतेची कमाल मर्यादा गाठलेली आहे. या प्रकारची तीनशे विमाने सध्या अमेरिकेतील एडवर्ड बेस विमानतळांवरून वापरली जात आहेत. फायटिंग फाल्कन या टोपण नावाने ते विमान ओळखले जाते.

या विमानात फक्त एकच पायलट बसू शकतो. त्याच्या समोरील बाजूला प्रचंड बोर्डस् असून त्यात दोन गणकयंत्रे आणि वेगवेगळ्या कार्यासाठी वापरावी लागणारी तीनशे बटने, डायल्स वगैरेंचा समावेश असतो. या प्रत्येक विमानाची किंमत सात कोटी रुपये इतकी असून त्यात विविध प्रकारची अत्याधुनिकता आहे.

यापैकी एका गणकयंत्रात त्या वैमानिकाचा आवाज आणि त्याने दिलेल्या आज्ञा नोंदलेल्या असतात. उड्डाण करताना गणकयंत्रामार्फत त्या विमानाचा फ्लाईट प्लॅन विचारात घेतला जातो व त्यानुसार उड्डाण व्यवस्थितपणे नियंत्रित केले जाते. जेव्हा शत्रूच्या दारुगोळ्यांच्या साठ्यांवर, शत्रूच्या केंद्रांवर किंवा ठराविक लक्ष्यावर हल्ला करावयाचा असेल तेव्हा वैमानिक दूरवरून निरीक्षण करतो व त्यानुसार गणकयंत्राला तोंडी आज्ञा देतो. गणकयंत्राकडे त्याने स्वतःच्या आवाजात दिलेल्या आज्ञा असतात त्या पडताळून पाहिल्या जातात. त्या आज्ञा योग्य प्रकारे जुळत असल्यास पंखाखालील असलेल्या भागातून बाँब्स किंवा गोळ्या झाडल्या जातात. हे कार्य अक्षरशः क्षणार्धात होते. लक्ष्यावर वर्षाव केल्यानंतर शत्रूच्या विमानविरोधी तोफांना किंवा इतर अस्त्रांच्या माऱ्यामुळे बळी पडू नये म्हणून वैमानिक विमानाला तोंडी आज्ञा देतो. त्यानुसार ते विमान झटकन गिरकी घेऊन मार्ग बदलते. शत्रूच्या माऱ्यातून सुटका होण्यासाठी एकदम वळून निघून जाण्यासारखा कठीण व सर्वोत्तम उपाय फायटींग फाल्कन व्यवस्थितपणे करू शकते असे सिद्ध झाले आहे.

या विमानातील अजून एक वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे त्याचे त्रिकोणाकृती पंख, शेपूट, रडार हे गणकयंत्रामार्फत नियंत्रित असतात. त्यामुळे विमानाची उंची कमी करणे, बाँबफेक झाल्यावर क्षणार्धात दिशा बदलून शत्रूच्या टप्प्यातून हुलकावणी देऊन बाहेर पडणे या क्रिया यशस्वीपणे पूर्ण होतात.

फायटींग फाल्कनमध्ये अजून एक वैशिष्ट्यपूर्ण रचना आहे ती म्हणजे टेलिव्हिजन पडद्याची. ज्या लक्ष्यावर हल्ला चढवायचा असेल ते केंद्र पडद्यावर प्रथम दिसू लागते. ते लक्ष्य निश्चित झाल्यावर त्यापासून विमानाचे अंतर, वेग यांची आकडेमोड होते. त्यानुसार किती दूरवरून हल्ला अचूकपणे होईल याची गणकयंत्रानुसार निश्चिती होते. ते लक्ष्य पक्के झाल्यावर पडद्यावर स्पष्टपणे दिसू लागते. यावेळी शत्रूच्या हल्ल्याच्या यंत्रणेला गोंधळात टाकण्यासाठी विमान डाव्या आणि उजव्या बाजूला क्रमाक्रमाने कलंडते. विमानाने आपली पातळी सातत्याने बदलल्यास शत्रूला नेम घेता येत नाही. साधारणतः चारशे ते पाचशे फूट दूरवरून अचूकपणे बाँब भिरकावले जाऊन फायटींग फाल्कनचे काम फत्ते होते.

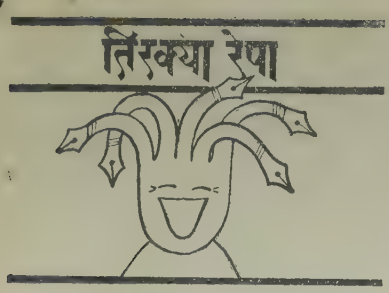
अगदी अचूकपणे आणि मानवी हाताने किंचितही चूक शिल्लक राहू नये, केवळ ध्वनीच्या आज्ञेनुसार विमानावर ताबा ठेवण्याची ही पद्धत म्हणजे आधुनिक इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्समधील यशाचा फार मोठा टप्पा आहे.

अती पुरातन अवशेष

काही कालमर्यादेनंतर ठराविक सजीव नामशेष होत असतात. मृत झालेले प्राणी जमिनीत गाडले जातात, त्यांचे शरीरावर विविध क्रिया होतात आणि त्यापासून जिवाश्म (फॉसिल्स) निर्मिती होते. हजारो. लाखो वर्ष जिवाश्म पृथ्वीच्या आंतर थरात गाडलेले राहतात. काही कारणांनी ते आढळून येतात. रेडिओ कार्बन तंत्र, एक्स रे किरणांचा वापर करून त्या अवशेषांचे वय ठरविण्यात येते. त्या अवशेषांचा काल ठरवून सजीवांची उत्क्रांती (Evolution) निश्चित करता येते.

नॅशनल जिओग्राफिक आणि फ्रेंच संशोधकांच्या तुकडीला नुकताच बोलिव्हियाच्या भागात सापडलेल्या जिवाश्माचे वय ७० दशलक्ष वर्षांचे असून युरोप व अमेरिका खंडात सापडलेला तो सर्वात पुरातन अवशेष आहे. लॅरी मार्शल यांचे मार्गदर्शनानुसार ब्राझील, अर्जेंटिना, बोलिव्हिया या देशांमध्ये जिवाश्मांचे संशोधन केले जात आहे. त्यापैकी अर्जेंटिना, ब्राझिल येथील सापडलेल्या हातापायांच्या पाठीच्या कण्याच्या जिवाश्मांचे वय ५० ते ६० दशलक्ष वर्षांपूर्वीचे आहे. बोलिव्हियात सापडलेल्या जिवाश्मांमध्ये तीन प्रकार आढळले. त्यानुसार ते सस्तन प्राणी, सरपटणारे होते त्यांच्या शरीरामध्ये पिल्ले ठेवण्यासाठी कांगारूप्रमाणे पिशव्या असाव्यात असाही अंदाज व्यक्त केला आहे.

त्या प्राण्यांच्या अवशेषांच्या आकारानुसार त्यातील काही प्राणी उंदीर, मांजर व कुत्रा यांच्या शरीराच्या आकाराचे असावेत असा अंदाज व्यक्त केला आहे. या सापडलेल्या अवशेषांचा अनेकविध स्वरूपाचा अभ्यास सध्या अमेरिकन, फ्रेंच शास्त्रज्ञ करीत आहेत. त्यानंतर त्या प्राण्यांचे नाव, जात, उपजात इत्यादी इतर शास्त्रीय माहिती उपलब्ध होईल. सध्या त्यातील काही अवशेष नॅशनल जिओग्राफिकच्या आणि फ्रान्समधील संग्रहालयात ठेवण्यात आले आहेत. विविध जिवाश्माचा पद्धतशीर अभ्यास करण्याचा विभाग सध्या कार्यरत आहे. जिवाश्मांच्या मदतीने गेल्या लाखो वर्षांत पृथ्वीवर झालेले भौगोलिक बदल, पुरातन काळी वावरत असलेले प्राणी, जमिनीच्या पोटातील खनिजे, पट्रोलियम याची माहिती उपलब्ध होते. यामुळे जिवाश्मांचा अभ्यास हे उज्ज्वल भवितव्य असलेले शास्त्र आहे. □□



● मुकुंद टाकसाळे

हरिशंकर परसाईच्या कथा :

आफ्टर ऑल माणूस

(जनता पक्ष पहिल्यांदा सत्तेवर आला त्या काळातली ही गोष्ट.)

१९ मार्चला लोकसभेची निवडणूक होणार होती. तेव्हा काँग्रेसचं सरकार होतं.

अठरा मार्चच्या संध्याकाळी आम्ही शेजारी-पाजारी मिळून निवडणुकीवर गप्पा मारत होतो. 'ते'सुद्धा आमच्यात होतेच.

"उद्या मतदान," एकजण म्हणाला.

"यावेळी जनता पक्ष जोरात आहे." दुसरा म्हणाला.

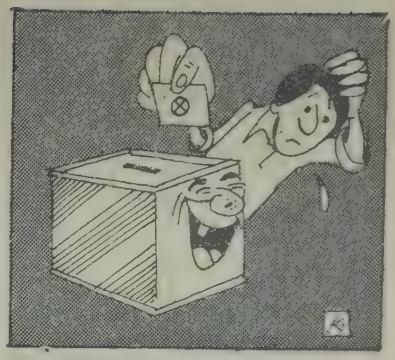
"आपण तर काँग्रेसलाच मत देणार." 'ते' गृहस्थ म्हणाले, "आफ्टर ऑल आम्ही सरकारी नोकर पडतो."

मतदान झालं.

बावीस तारखेला निवडणुकांचे निकाल जाहीर झाल्यानंतर पुन्हा आम्ही एकत्र बसून गप्पा मारत होतो.

"आता 'जनता'चं सरकार बनल्यात जमा आहे," एकजण म्हणाला.

"कुणाला वाटलं होतं का काँग्रेसचा या प्रकारे धुव्वा उडेल व जनता पक्ष जिंकेल?"



'ते' पुढं सरसावले. म्हणाले, "चला आमचं मत वाया गेलं नाही. जनता पक्षाच्या कामी आलं."

मला आठवलं की हा गृहस्थ 'आपण काँग्रेसला मत देणार' असं पूर्वी म्हणत होता. मी त्यांना विचारलं, "म्हणजे तुम्ही जनता पक्षाला मत दिलंत की काय?"

"हो ना– काय करणार? आफ्टर ऑल आम्ही सरकारी नोकर" ते म्हणाले. □

हरिशंकर परसाई हे हिंदीतले जाणेमाने 'व्यंग्य' लेखक.

'व्यंग्य' ला नेमका मराठी प्रतिशब्द नाही. 'उपहास' किंवा 'उपरोध' या शब्दांमध्ये 'व्यंग्य'च्या साऱ्या छटा येतातच असे नाही. त्यातून परसाई ज्या प्रकारचे 'व्यंग्य' लेखन करतात, त्या प्रकारचे लेखन मराठीत फारसे होत नाही. तेव्हा मराठी वाचकांना या लेखकाचा आणि त्याच्या लेखनाचा परिचय घडवावा हा 'तिरक्या रेषा' या सदरामागचा उद्देश.

हरिशंकर परसाई हे हिंदीतले पहिले व्यंग्य लेखक की ज्यांनी 'व्यंग्य' या लेखनप्रकाराला हलक्याफुलक्या मनोरंजनाच्या पारंपरिक परिघातून बाहेर काढून त्याचे नाते समाजातल्या व्यापक प्रश्नांशी आणि कठोर वास्तवाशी जोडले.

'केवळ हसवणे' हा त्यांचा लेखनाचा एकमेव उद्देश नक्कीच नाही. त्यांचे साहित्य वाचल्यानंतर गुदगुल्या होत नाहीत तर एक प्रकारची सल मनामध्ये राहाते. त्यांचा विनोद जीवनातल्या विसंगती, अन्तर्विरोध, विकृती, ढोंग यांना उघडेनागडे करतो. मुख्य म्हणजे हा विनोद वाचकांना विचार करायला भाग पाडतो.

गेली २५ वर्षे हरिशंकर परसाई हे सातत्याने राजकीय-सामाजिक व्यंग्यलेखन करत आहेत. त्यांच्या 'विकलांग श्रद्धा का दौर' या पुस्तकाला १९८२ साली साहित्य अकादमीचा पुरस्कार मिळालेला आहे. वैष्णव की फिसलन, शिकायत मुझे भी है, पगडण्डियों का जमाना, तिरछी रेखायें, जैसे उनके दिन फिरे, बेईमानी की परत, और अन्त में, ठिठुरता हुआ गणतंत्र, निठ्ठले की डायरी ही त्यांची काही गाजलेली पुस्तके.

समाजातल्या रूढी, अंधश्रद्धा, पाखंड बुरसटलेपण यावर हा लेखक अत्यंत हिरीरीने हल्ला चढवतो. निश्चित अशी एक



पुरोगामी 'मार्क्सवादी' दृष्टी त्यापाठीमागे आहे. अनेकदा त्यांच्यावर ते 'अती राजकीय' असल्याचा आरोप केला जातो. हरिशंकर परसाई स्वतः या आरोपाला, 'आरोप' न मानता, बहुमानच मानतात.

तिवारीजींचा हुंडा

तिवारीजी भला माणूस आहे. त्यांचा मुलगा अविनाश तडफदार तरुण आहे. तो लखनौला असतो. इंजिनियर आहे.

तिवारीजींना अविनाशचं लग्न करायचं आहे. ते एकापाठोपाठ एक 'टेण्डर' मागवत सुटलेले आहेत. कुणी आपल्या मुलीबाबत बोलायला आलं की ते म्हणायचे, "कानपूरचे मिसिरजी तीस हजार सांगून गेलेत, अलाहाबादचे दुबेजी पस्तीस हजार द्यायला तयार आहेत, ग्वाल्हेरचे पाण्डेजी चाळीस हजार म्हणताहेत. तुम्ही तुमचा आकडा सांगा. नोट करून ठेवतो. नंतर तुम्हांला निर्णय कळवण्यात येईल."

तो माणूस म्हणायचा, "तिवारीजी, आय. ए. एस. मुलगा चाळीस पंचेचाळीस हजार घेतो. तुमचे चिरंजीव इंजिनियर आहेत तेव्हा..."

"याचा अर्थ तुम्हांला नवे रेट माहीत नाहीत. आता आय. ए. एस. मुलगा एक लाखाला झालाय." तिवारीजी त्याला माहिती पुरवायचे.

लखनौला पाण्डेजी म्हणून एक गृहस्थ होते. त्यांची परिस्थिती जेमतेमच होती.

● SAILESH KOTTARY

in Hyderabad

How an Indian entrepreneur is teaching the Western pharmaceutical majors a lesson or two



THE REDDY PRESCRIPTION

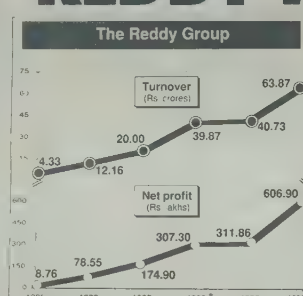
In the past few years, there has been a quiet and remarkable change in the economics of the global pharmaceutical business. New production processes are being perfected by which manufacturing costs of several drugs have been drastically slashed. Surprisingly, these technologies are not being honed in laboratories in the US, Germany or Japan. They have been spawned in Hyderabad by Dr Anji Reddy, a pharmacologist, who is working overtime to produce drugs at a fraction of their existing costs. Which of course is causing heartburn among the top brass of the intensely profit conscious global pharmaceutical majors.

Reddy's success is especially sweet considering that for decades, third world countries, including India, have been complaining of the high drug prices charged by the multinationals in these countries which many felt bore no relation to actual costs. Now at least one man has been successful in fighting them and forcing them to slash prices.

At the heart of Dr Anji Reddy's success lies a prescription which is as remarkably simple as it is sure fire. Most of the advanced countries allow patents for the drugs as well as its production process. But India allows only the production process to be patented.

Consequently Reddy, a crack pharmacologist, has come up with different manufacturing processes which have not only enabled him to get around the patent laws but, due to remarkably low costs, have also altered the economies of the industry worldwide.

"My quest has not been to merely find alternate production processes but to produce better quality drugs at much lower costs," explains Reddy. "For example, the ibuprofen we manufacture has 99.9 per cent purity whereas the pharmacopia standard is 98 per cent," says Reddy. And his endeavours are having many spin-off benefits, many new drugs are now being introduced in India within months of their international launch.



Reddy's processes are proving worrisome to the majors, as was evident when his company Cheminor Drugs was singled out by the US firm Ethyl Corporation as being responsible for lowering the price of ibuprofen, the popular analgesic, in the US market. Ethyl Corporation made out a case for ending duty free entry status to Cheminor's ibuprofen but the petition was turned down in April by President Bush.

"In the pharmaceutical industry, we Indians are now respected, and perhaps even feared," says Reddy, modestly preferring to downplay his role in winning the respect of the international pharmaceutical fraternity. Indeed, the Western multinationals have much to fear about Reddy. Since he entered the export market barely three years ago, Reddy has emerged as the second largest producer of norfloxacin, an anti-bacterial drug, in the process lowering world prices from Rs 6000 per kilogram to Rs 3800. Then there is ibuprofen, the top selling painkiller, of which Reddy is the world's third largest manufacturer having lowered prices to a third from the Rs 1000 per kilogram prevailing in 1988. Reddy's latest drug to have stormed the world markets is ranitidine, used in the treatment of peptic ulcers, and he is already the second largest manufacturer in the world, behind Glaxo, which discovered and patented the drug.

Reddy obtained his doctorate from the National Chemical Laboratory in 1967 and worked with the public sector Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited for six years. During his tenure, Reddy worked as the chief technologist of IDPL's Hyderabad branch and was responsible for 'optimising' the adaptation of laboratory processes to commercial production. "The job provided me with invaluable experience and my team introduced no less than eight drugs in three years," says Reddy.

That stint gave Reddy the determination to become an entrepreneur and he started Unilyods in 1975 with two other promoters and was its managing director for seven years. Unilyods was the first company to manufacture metronidazone used in treating amoebic diseases. In 1980 Reddy set up Standard Organics but he went on his own after he broke away with his business colleagues in 1984 and set up Dr Reddy's Laboratories and Cheminor Drugs at a project cost of Rs80 lakhs.

Singularly, Reddy did not enter industry to lay siege to the bastions of the drug majors. His initial road to growth lay in manufacturing drugs which were in short supply in the domestic market and so Dr Reddy's Labs began producing methyl dopa (used in treating blood pressure) while Cheminor began with ibuprofen.

The big break to go international came in 1986 when Merck Sharpe and Dohme began experiencing difficulties in procuring supplies of methyl dopa for its formulations, the quality of which would meet the specifications laid down by its US parent company. The problem arose because the Indian company could no longer import any more of the drug from its parent company according to the import policy, since the same was indigenously available. But the problem with indigenous supplies was one of quality. So Reddy decided to take up the challenge; and that was turning point.

Within three months he came up with a manufacturing process which produced methyl dopa with a quality which passed the tests of the American firm. And so Dr Reddy's Laboratories joined the select club of approved 'sources' which could supply pharmaceutical products acceptable to countries ranging from Germany to Japan.

Following up on his achievement, Reddy decided to get his plants approved by the US Federal Drug Administration which would facilitate the use of his products by US pharmaceutical companies for their formulations. Reddy got his approval in 1987 and today out of the 15 Indian pharmaceutical plants approved by the FDA, three belong to the Reddy group of companies which currently have a turnover of about Rs 60 crores.

On his table, Reddy keeps a handy list of drugs whose patent lives are nearly over. His growth impetus has its source in that list for he plans with great care before deciding on which listed product he should bring to bear his genius as an organic chemist. To be sure, the patents of both methyl dopa and ibuprofen had run out when Reddy began their manufacture, but his skill in commercial production beat the stuffing out of the competition.

With success inevitably attracting imitators, Reddy is aware of the crush of new entrants in the field who are trying to replicate his formula. But Reddy is confident of retaining the winning edge. "Pioneering new technology is a tricky business...and we are miles ahead of the competition," he confidently asserts.

Whether he succeeds in staying ahead of the pack on the treadmill which he himself has created, is another matter. But right now, that man from Hyderabad is writing the rules of a game which until recently had been dominated by the Western multinationals.

IS ULFA'S TEA PARTY OVER?

A report on the mood in Calcutta's tea companies in the wake of ULFA's growing militancy in the Assam gardens.

● S N M ABDI

in Calcutta

The imposition of President's rule in Assam has brought cheer to the executive suites of the Calcutta based tea companies. For it is the first clear sign that the Union government is serious about tackling *the economic downslide which has hit the state. The downslide* has coincided with the growing militancy of the secessionist United Liberation Front of Assam whose writ has become law giving rise to the presumption that ULFA has the tacit approval of the Asom Gano Parishad government.

To be sure, the Centre's empathy with business had become apparent earlier in the month when it closely coordinated with Unilever and allowed military airfields to be used by the multinational in evacuating 185 people — personnel of Unilever's Doom Dooma tea estates and their families — on November 8.

That was two days before the expiry of the deadline for forced payment of Rs 42 lakhs by the tea company to ULFA. Since then, two Unilever subsidiaries, Brooke Bond and Lipton, have boycotted two successive weekly tea auctions at Guwahati. Their absence resulted in the withdrawal of 50,000 packages of tea valued at over Rs 14 crores in the first week. Last week, 2.47 million kg of tea worth Rs 17 crores was left unsold at the auction.

The repercussions of the drastic decline in sales at the Guwahati tea auction centre, the largest CTC (crush, tear and curl) tea auction centre in the world *have been spelt out by the auction centre itself:* "The very existence of the centre is in jeopardy and it is apprehended that there might be large scale loss of jobs and income and ultimately result in a tremendous impact on the state tea industry itself, on which over 15 lakh people depend for livelihood and sustenance." The auction centre's press release also pointed out sarcastically that the Assam government earned Rs 15 crores as sales tax last year from the centre "without spending a single rupee."

Unilever had made it clear that participation in tea auctions is ruled out until the AGP government ensures immunity against further extortion attempts by ULFA. And before it was brushed aside by the Presidential fiat, there were signs that the AGP administration was making efforts to woo back Brooke Bond and Lipton to enter the auctions; after initially threatening that it would take over Doom Dooma's seven tea gardens.

Tea is a prime business in Assam. This year, the industry was poised for a record production of 400 million kg, but the Assam government's calculated apathy in dealing with ULFA has



caused a major upset, according to an Indian Tea Association spokesman. Any decline in production would inevitably have an adverse affect not only on the earnings of tea companies, which are mostly based in Calcutta, but on the economy of Assam and the nation's foreign exchange earnings. This indeed is the basis for the concern and anxiety in New Delhi and Calcutta which resulted in the imposition of Presidential's rule.

Over the past two years, several non-Assamese traders, shopowners, contractors, businessmen and entrepreneurs have been slain by ULFA. Besides passing and executing death sentences, it has extorted huge sums of money from the trading community. Around the middle of this year, ULFA started terrorising tea garden managements to contribute to the organisation's kitty. Sources in the special branch of the Assam police say that ULFA has now over Rs 100 crores in its kitty.

The fall-out of the intimidation and harrassment of non-Assamese businessmen is visible in Calcutta. Marwaris, Gujaratis and Bengalis who have fled Assam have pushed up real estate prices in the city. Said a property broker: "The impact is yet to be felt in the business districts. But the price of residential flats has increased by around Rs 200 per square foot." Besides acquiring flats, the 'refugees' are also applying in droves for club memberships.

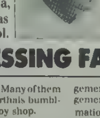
Police pickets outside industrialist Jit Paul's office and residence in Calcutta are stark reminders of the continuing reign of terror unleashed by ULFA. Although the secessionist outfit's writ runs primarily in Assam, an elaborate security cover was provided to Jit Paul after his younger brother, Surendra Paul, chairman of the Assam Frontier Tea Company, was gunned down by ULFA hit men in broad daylight near Tinsukia on April 9.

Even after the dastardly killing, the Assam government did not take concrete steps to tame ULFA. Political observers are of the opinion that ULFA is the armed wing of the AGP, and the Front could come in handy at the time of elections. The Union government had recommended on November 15 that certain areas in the state be declared as *'troubled' as the first step towards flushing out ULFA extremists.* But the recommendation had, predictably enough, gone abegging.

That the Centre was seized with ULFA's growing militancy was evident when prime minister Chandra Shekhar was briefed about the Assam situation by Union government officials at his very first interface with them after his swearing-in. And it was all too evident that in the square off between ULFA and the tea companies, the initiative rested with the Centre.

Meanwhile, even though there is some cheer in the air, the mood is sombre in the corridors of the tea companies as the top brass realise that their estate managers are finding life with ULFA a harrowing experience. And it is still too early to assess how ULFA will react to the New Delhi proclamation. There are also deep suspisions that some companies are making secret payments to ULFA if only to buy insurance for their executives on the ranges. But whether there is any hope of preventing end game or otherwise for the tea companies, in Assam there is bound to be a long hiatus before the tea party can begin again.

CORPORATE TRACK



Manish Nandy of the Asian Institute of Management, Manila, on the importance of information as a management tool.

ENDING THE GUESSING FACTOR

The world is supposedly entering the information age. How are the managers entering it? Are they striding into it with confidence? Or, are events dragging them into it, screaming and kicking?

Admittedly managers are not going about like Luddites, trying to wreck all computers and fax machines in sight. Some love the new gizmos, some hate or fear them, and the rest line up somewhere between these extremes. It will be hard to claim though that managers understand enough about the new contraptions and can make the best use of them. Many of them are like Neanderthals bumbling around in a toy shop.

Primitive Managerial Information

If they were not, they would at least notice the primitive status of managerial information. The moment someone mentions information, we tend instantly to think of technical information: information about an economy, a sector, an industry, an organisation, a market, a product. Equally important however is managerial information: Information about management concepts, management practices, management techniques and management training. Such information can make a vital difference to the quality of managers' performance in an organization.

Take a simple example. The chief executive of an organisation wants to change the adversarial relations with his employees' union. Wondering how to go about it, he picks up a few ideas typically from a meeting of the local chamber of commerce or friends he golfs with over weekends. In a less typical case, he may have read something in Forbes or Harvard Business Review and decides to adapt an idea for his use. This is a hit-and-miss procedure that is more likely to miss or hit far from the target.

Ideally the chief executive should be able to say, "I want to know of every documented case in the last five years where a company has made a success of changing a hostile union into a friendly union. I want to choose the ones out of those that appeal to me, and read more about them. I want to do that before I decide how I should proceed in my company." Today if he says that, he will not get what he wants. If he is a determined man, he may get subordinates to assemble the information, but it will be a daunting task. He would have found it much easier to secure any kind of technical information, whether on the mating mores of Mexican mammals or on major materials in medieval metallurgy. For managerial information he must search and research, and reinvent the wheel for himself. No wonder chief executivers confine themselves to tips heard in the Chamber.

The sad truth is that in developing countries we have no data bases on managerial innovations, no easy computer access to what other managers have created or refined. If managers want to learn from other managers' experience, develop further what others have initiated instead of starting from scratch, they must read extensively and become almost a researcher. Few managers have the time or the inclination to do that. The advice to managers to read more, one that academics in management institutes offer frequently, is therefore well-intended but ill-conceived. Managers do not feel motivated to read enough, because they do not see a straight line between what they read and what they achieve. They have to read too much before they ever locate something of practical use to them. Besides, their job is to manage, not to imbibe knowledge.

More Important Today

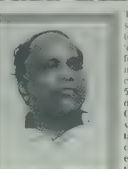
The importance of such information has increased, not diminished, in the last decade. Several developing countries have secured remarkable success with new management strategies. Managers in Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore have moved in strikingly different ways to overcome their problems and undergird their companies. We have to understand their policies and practices, so that we do not fatuously illustrate Santayana's remark that people who disregard history are condemned to repeat its mistakes. Such mistakes can be fatal when competition is gnawing at your heels.

More important, we have great opportunities to learn from the experience of our neighbours in the Asia-Pacific rim. But learn we can only if there is effort to record, analyse and classify what they have done in their production, marketing, financing, personnel and export efforts.

If knowledge is power, information that contributes to it is an empowering element. It empowers the managers to improve their organisation, to adapt it to new circumstances. They need, not only technical data, but managerial information that will strengthen their hands and broaden their vision.

BRIEFINGS

SCRAP LICENSING



The Maharashtra chief minister, Sharad Pawar, appealed to the Central authorities to 'dispassionately' examine the feasibility of dispensing with industrial licensing in the country, while addressing the 56th annual general meeting of the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce and Industries. He said that rapid dismantling of tariffs in the East European countries and the USSR had exposed the "inherent" limitation of a centrally planned economy devoid of any individual incentives. He felt a need to scrap licenses because "all these years we pursued an inward-looking model of development which, in its zeal for import substitution, protected our industries from outside competition and, in the name of planning, imposed a regime of licenses, controls and regulations."

PRICE HIKE REVIEW

The government is considering a review of the 25 per cent hike in the price of petroleum products imposed in the wake of the Gulf crisis. The Union Petroleum and Chemicals minister, Satya Prakash Malaviya announced that while the 20 per cent cut in use of petroleum products will continue, diesel will be exempted. The exemption in diesel will primarily help the agricultural sector.

FIBRE AGREEMENT

The Indian negotiators at the GATT talks in Geneva have made the US concede the developing countries' demand to dismantle the multi fibre agreement (MFA) freeing global trade in textiles from the shackles of the quota system. The dismantling of the MFA is expected to give a big boost to the developing countries' exports of textiles to the western world. India has a high stake in opening up world trade in textiles as such exports account for over one-fifth of the country's export earnings and free trade promises to bring greater benefits.

RECORD TRADE DEFICIT

The trade deficit in rupee terms for September 1990 is a little over three times that in September 1989. In terms of the US dollar, the shortfall this year is 2.85 times that last year. *Based on the import trend in September, the foreign currency assets are sufficient to finance a mere 24 days' import requirements. The trade deficit in September has turned out to be an all-time record for any month - Rs 1208 crores.*

IMPORT LICENSES

In a desperate bid to control imports, the government has decided that no fresh import licenses for industrial raw materials and components be issued till December end. The measures stem from the steep fall in foreign exchange reserves which have touched an all-time low of Rs 3,045 crores. In a follow-up move, the Reserve Bank of India, has made a further bid to slash imports by instructing commercial banks to insist on a 50 per cent margin from importers at the time of opening letters of credit for imports.

PRIVATISATION

The World Bank and other international financial institutions have stepped up pressure on India to privatise nationalised banks and capital markets. The confidential report suggests that the cash reserves and liquidity requirements of Indian Banks be lowered from 55 to 30 per cent. The report suggests that Indian banks are not only under capitalised but are also among the least profitable in the world and bring in the lowest return (0.15 per cent) in Asia on assets. Capital and reserves average about 1.5 per cent of assets compared to four per cent in Korea and Pakistan and upto six per cent in Taiwan and Singapore.

OGL IMPORTS

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed banks to stop financing all capital goods imports and use instead the large unused lines of credit which lie with IDBI, ICICI and IFCI. The commercial banks are sceptical about the ability of the financial institutions to handle a large number of varying cases with varying volumes of requirements. According to them, the institutions have experience in processing the needs of only a few large importers.

PLANNING REFORM

The Planning Commission has advocated a three-pronged strategy of institutional reform to ensure "substance, speed and suitability" of rural development in the Eighth Plan by reducing the role of government and making it a people-led process. [illegible]

● SADANAND KANWALLI
In Dharwad

INDIA is a paradise for eco-exploiters. Nobody can check them, as there is a powerful nexus of politician-industrialist-bureaucrat that is engaged in eco-destruction. Small fish get caught, while the big ones bustle away. Of late, they are not allowed to go scot free as environmental protests are building up. One such concerted fight has been against Karnataka Pulpwood Limited (KPL). Spearheading this movement against illegal expropriation of common land by the KPL is the Samaj Parivartan Samudaya (SPS), Dharwad.

A news item in November 1984 said the joint sector company KPL would be launched. The SPS smelt a rat. Soon its worst apprehensions came true. The KPL came into existence in February 1985 with 41 per cent shares held by the government-owned Karnataka Forest Development Corporation (KFDC) and 49 by the Birla-owned Gwalior Rayon and Silk Manufacturing Company Limited (GRASIM), with its unit Harihar Polyfibres (HPF) at Kumarapattana in Ranebennur taluk of Dharwad. The avowed purpose



The villagers of Kusnur: Protesting in the rain and (inset) Chandi Prasad Bhatt: Offered to be arrested

BATTLING ECO-EXPLOITERS

The environmental movement in India is well on the way to a position of strength. In Dharwad, the Samaj Parivartan Samudaya is spearheading a movement against illegal expropriation of common land by the Karnataka Pulpwood Limited. For the first time, an industrial giant has been put on the mat. Its misdeeds have been exposed. And people are alert about their eco-rights.

behind forming the KPL was to make the wood-based industry profitable for the government. But the real intention was to grow eucalyptus and other fast-growing species on 30,000 ha of common and forest land for the captive consumption of the private partner HPF. Thereby, depriving lakhs of villagers of their right to basic needs of fodder, fuel, leaf manure, and raw material for crafts like basket-weaving and leaf plate-making. And alienating common land from the villagers, although the KPL agreement specifies exclusion of common land. Is this what the KFDC is meant for? Is this forest development?

Dr K Shivaram Karanth, the Jnanpeeth award-winner, sounded a public alert by writing 'Towards total destruction of forests, in *Kannada Prabha* and *Prajavani* in December 1984. Affected people and voluntary organisations, like the Vruksa Samarakshisi Vedike (Save Trees Forum), Shimoga, Tungabhadra Parisara Samiti, Ranebennur, Guddanadu Abhivruddhi Samiti (Hill Area Development Committee), Kusnur and Karnataka Raita Sangha rallied together and shot off memoranda to officials concerned, held protest meetings and prevented the KPL bulldozers from clearfelling forests. According to the amended Forest Conservation Act (FCA), no forest land can be cleared of trees which have grown naturally without the prior approval of the Central government. The first thing the KPL did was to clearfell the forests !

Kadidal Manjappa, former Karnataka chief minister, D M Chandrasekhar, retired chief justice of Karnataka, A R Bedarinarayan, ex-Education Minister of Karnataka, Justice V M Tarkunde and journalists like Kuldip Nayyar, Ajit Bhattacharjea and Khadri Shamanna supported the movement.

Since he had fathered KPL, Ramakrishna Hegde took it upon himself to nurture it. On March 10, 1985, just three days after his massive victory he pulled up the development commissioner, the revenue commissioner and others concerned for tardiness in implementing the Farm Forestry Project (FFP), a parallel scheme planned by him alongside the KPL, ostensibly to help poor farmers. Loans were granted to farmers by Grameen banks for growing eucalyptus on 45,000 acres of common land and C&D land in Dharwad, Chitradurg, Bellary and Shimoga districts in contradiction to the policy of the Janata government in Karnataka not to allow eucalyptus plantation in areas with a rainfall of 40 inches and above. Another instance of doublecross by politicians. The poor were to sell their eucalyptus woodlots at reasonable rates. Transportation costs forbid farmers from selling elsewhere. So, the nearby HPF is the monopoly buyer and whatever it fixes is 'reasonable'. Farmers, in effect, were captive sellers. A splendid way to help the poor! Besides, nothing grows under or around the eucalyptus. No animal touches its bark or leaves. No birds sing, for none nest there. The eucalyptus satisfies the appetite of pulp-making industries like the HPF, which produce artificial yarn.

Representatives of several voluntary organisations submitted a memorandum to Hegde on March 27, 1985. Despite reminders, he chose not to respond. The signatories met in Bangalore in April 1985 to chalk out a course of action. They went to the people in the KPL-affected areas and shared all the information. Street plays helped create public awareness. The press came out strongly against the government-HPF nexus. Bowing to pressure, officers were instructed, orally, not to implement the FFP. All the same, the KPL project went on.

A delegation met Hegde on August 12, 1985 for direct dialogue. All that came out of it was a polite hearing and cups of tea. Hegde appeared so soldout that nothing would budge him from the obligation to help the Birlas. He had decided to turn a deaf ear to all wise counsel.

Legal battle

In December 1986, Karanth, the SPS and the Centre for Science and Environment (New Delhi), filed in the Supreme Court a public interest writ on grounds of infringement of the right to livelihood and violation of the laws of the land. On March 24, 1987 the SC issued a stay order. The Karnataka government and the KPL were caught napping. They hadn't anticipated the order, otherwise, they could easily have contrived to transfer all the land before. On November 9, 1987, the state government and the KPL filed affidavits in the SC that the KPL was in possession of only 3,590 ha as on that date. A lie. As chief conservator of forests (general) S Parmeshwarappa had ordered six months after the SC order and two months earlier than filing the affidavits, transfer of 12,000 ha of forest land as requested by KPL joint managing director N S Adkoli, who is an HPF nominee on the board.

Compliance was done in just eight days. Courtesy Hegde and Forest Minister G S Bagalkot. Strangely enough, Parameshwarappa was also chairman-cum-managing director of KPL. Proof of violations is provided by Forest Minister B Basavalingappa's replies to the legislative assembly on June 13, 1990, wherein it is stated that 3,500 ha were ordered on January 15, 1986 and uptill now 12,615.68 ha were given before the SC order and 14,560.92 ha in violation of that order. The KFDC annual report for 1987-88 admits the KPL had raised plantations in 600 ha in 1985, 2,200 ha in 1986, 2,475 ha in 1987 and 4,000 ha in 1988. Which is far in excess of the 3,590 ha sworn in the affidavit. It is as though the laws of the land, not even SC orders, cannot restrain the Birlas. In the teeth of facts, to file affidavits that the KPL was in possession of only 3,590 ha as on March 24, 1987!

The petitioners of the public interest writ filed a contempt of court and perjury case against Parameshwarappa, Adkoli, vice-chairman of HPF Nirmal Chainani and the Karnataka government represented by under-secretary, forests, animal husbandry and fisheries K Hiriyanna for swearing false affidavits. Further evidence is provided by the second counter-affidavit filed by Hiriyanna on January 6, 1989, wherein it is stated that the order of Parameshwarappa was not a government order and that it came to the knowledge of the government nine months after filing the first counteraffidavit and, hence, charges of contempt of court may be dropped. The government has denied financial or legal assistance to Parameshwarappa to fight the contempt case.

Verdict on the original writ petition and contempt case is pending. In the meantime, even though a major contempt case was pending, vacation judge Jagannath Shetty thought it fit to modify the stay and order on April 26, 1988 release of 3,000 ha to the KPL which had approached the SC on the pretext of having raised nurseries and incurred heavy losses.

People's front

People's protests continued to snowball. Over 2,000 villagers in Sagar held a protest meeting on November 14, 1986. In Ranebennur, people took out a mammoth procession and presented to the tahsildar a memorandum signed by 6,000. A symbolic bonfire was made of artificial yarn. The KPL, in spite of the stay order, bulldozed thousands of hectares of land, many of which it wasn't in possession of. The bulldozers also came to Jusnur village. It is in the heart land of Malnad, a high rainfall area on the eastern slopes of the western ghats.

The picture was changing as the GAS brought home to the people that the Kusnur common land is, in fact, a reserved forest with clearly marked grazing rights for the locals ever since 1896. Now, the people themselves decided to act. Kusnur became the hub of discussions and training camps for non-violent action. The people hit upon a unique kittiko-hachchiko (pluck and plant) satyagraha. KPL hirelings tried to lure away people with money and alcohol. On November 14, 1987, about 2,000 people descended on Kusnur and took an oath of truth and non-violence and started for the common land, singing and shouting slogans.

It was decided to pluck only 100 plants and plant 100 utilitarian species in their place, since November was not conducive for rearing trees. Moreover, they vowed to water them till the next monsoon. It is nothing short of a wonder that this could be achieved in seven months. Maneka Gandhi, reviewing the field of environment for the 1980s in *The Illustrated Weekly*, listed the satyagraha among the 10 major events. The World Watch Institute in its State Of The World 1989 report lauded the people's action.

Taste of violence

Encouraged by this, a largescale satyagraha was planned for the monsoons of 1988. A training camp from April 29 to May 1, 1988 was organised at Somsagar. At the end of the first day, it was decided to visit the satyagraha site at Hirebasur, just two km away, where KPL guards, however, rushed towards the villagers. When Bhattacharjea asked his photographer to take a picture of the unprovoked violence, the goons tried to snatch his camera.

Sudha Pawar, an SPS activist, fainted. When Bhattacharjea wanted to take her to a nearby hospital, the guards tried to stop his taxi on the pretext that somebody had stolen a wrist watch.

At 7 pm at the KPL office, hardly a kilometre from Somasagar, four guards and about 10 labourers stopped the taxi again. Bhattacharjea asked them to lodge a police complaint. But they held up the taxi for nearly two hours, threatening to burn it up. Getting word of this, many villagers rushed to the spot. The goons took to their heels.

The crowd, however, managed to get hold of two. In fact, Bhattacharjea had to restrain the people from beating them up.

Writing about this in Business India, Bhattacharjea said: "For the last 40 years I have covered wars, insurrections, riots, satyagrahas and other forms of social violence and tension. But never have I felt so personally threatened and faced so much hostility as when a bunch of KPL toughs held up my taxi on a remote dirty road three months ago"

The GAS announced that there will be satyagrahas on June 22 in Kusnur and on July 4, 1988 in Hirebasur. Sensing the strength of the movement, the forest secretary convened a meeting of SPS activists and top officers. The chief secretary explained that the meeting was to avoid confrontation between the movement and government. To resolve the conflict, he announced the appointment of the one-man commission of Dr Madhav Gadgil, director of environmental sciences, Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore) to report in three months the effects of alienation on common land. He promised that the report would be binding on the government and satyagrahis and appealed to both sides to suspend activities till then. As is its wont, the government went back on its promise and the commission was never appointed.

The mystery of the volte face was unravelled. Principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF) Shyamsundar, who was also chairman of the KFDC and Parmeshwarappa were party to the agreement, but took a U turn immediately. The PCCF wrote to the forest secretary not to implement the decisions taken at the June 3 meeting. He cast aspersions, in the letter, on the Kusnurites, the SPS and related matters. Shailendra Jain, executive president of HPF, called on Hegde and Forest Minister G S Bagalkot on June 20, 1988. Shyamsundar, Parameshwarappa, Adkoli and others visited Kusnur and asked the local staff to start planting trees on June 28, 1988. This is Birla's clout. Its arms are long enough to bearhug government machinery. What with black money flowing freely, people's interests just don't count in this dispensation.

While waiting for an official communication, the villagers decided instead to have on June 22 and July 4 avenue-tree planting. Frustrated with this attempt to scuttle the movement, the GAS gave an ultimatum to the government that it would go ahead with a satyagraha on August 8, 1988. The KPL intensified its propaganda and adopted devious tactics. It also obtained an injunction from the munsif magistrate of Hangal restraining SPS co-ordinator S R Hiremath from entering their (?) land. They thought that by keeping him out the satyagraha would fizzle out. But the people proved them wrong. The KPL won over some local politicians and even planned a programme of its own. But that came to nothing.

The rising sun of August 8, Quit India Day, saw Kusnur brimming with representatives from several voluntary organisations and supporters. Like on the previous occasion, the day started with the oath. Among those who took part in the satyagraha were H S Doreswamy, a senior Gandhian, K S Sharma, a union leader, Suresh Heblikar, film actor and director and environmentalists. While the multitude was half way to the satyagraha site, the assistant commissioner said the government had ordered their "preventive detention". Dr S L Pawar, vice-president of SPS, asked the officers in disgust, "What do we do with these saplings? Plant them in the police station?" Saplings in hand, 52 satyagrahis were arrested. Rashid Talib made a 30 minute film on the satyagraha and Doordarshan telecast it on the national hookup as the fifth episode in its 'Citizen and the Law' series.

Four days later, new chief minister S R Bommai said he recognised the movement and that he had asked the KPL not to plant eucalyptus trees in Kusnur and that they had agreed. However, the issue was not merely of eucalyptus nor was it restricted to Kusnur.

It has been a long and arduous march. Full of thorns and pebbles on the way. The quest for justice always is. For the first time an industrial giant has been put on the mat. Its misdeeds and related corruption have been exposed. And people have been alerted about their rights and shown how to fight for them. The environmental movement in India is well on the way to a position of strength. This story is a pointer in the direction of victory.

Politicians play games

When people are frustrated with corruption in the ruling party, some cunning fox leads another party, promising value-based governance. The voters swallow the bait and elect the new leader and his party. Only to be disillusioned. By the time the voters can teach him a lesson, he and his henchmen will have fattened themselves and jumped on to more lucrative bandwagons. Whoever is voted to power, it is the same story. It is the curled tail of a dog. Democracy has become a happy grazing ground for unscrupulous politicians. The game of politics continues to be played on with more finesse. Faces change and pass, the system remains.

Chief ministers in Karnataka have patronised the Birlas. Devraj Urs and Gundu Rao included. Public Accounts Committees have indicted them. Ramakrishna Hegde went out of his way to oblige the Birlas. Veerendra Patil has favoured them in quite a few ways. Any new incumbent will go the same way.

The Janata Party was routed in the 1985 Lok Sabha elections. Hegde resigned as chief minister to avert being dismissed. Riding the crest of a sympathy wave, the Janata Party, supported by the BJP and independents and, so responsive to people's aspirations, was voted back with an overwhelming majority. The people thought Hegde would do wonders. He did the opposite. The bottling affair and the phone-tapping embroiled him. It was some time before the beans of the KPL, the most anti-people of his misdeeds, spilled. But spill they did for all to see.

An excellent background

By a Cabinet reshuffle B Basavalingappa became Forest Minister. Activists explained to him the illegalities committed by and for the KPL. Basavalingappa fixed a hearing for May 25, 1990. Justice D M Chandrasekhar, S R Hiremath and Veeranna Jyoti from SPS represented the petitioners. Parmeshwarappa, now PCCF, CCF (general) Ramachandra Chetty, Forest Secretary D Muniappa and Deputy Forest Secretary S M Hegde were present. Adkoli was present to represent the KPL. It was evident that Basavalingappa had studied the case. Excerpts from the hearing:

Basavalingappa: How come, so many violations have been committed?

Parameshwarappa: I will explain to you later, in camera, sir.

Basavalingappa: No hush-hush. Say it out openly.

Parameshwarappa kept silent.

Basavalingappa: Parameshwarappa, on the one hand you were chief conservator of forests (general) handing over land and, on the other, chairman-cum-managing directr of the KPL, receiving that land. Didn't you see any impropriety in this?

Parameshwarappa: Sir, I had sent my resignation from the chairmanship of the KPL.

Basavalingappa: Muniappa, have you received it?

Muniappa: No, sir.

Basavalingappa: Parameshwarappa, if you are serious about it, even now you can resign.

(After about two weeks, Belliappa was appointed chairman-cum-managing director of KPL in place of Parameshwarappa, who resigned.)

Basavalingappa: Parameshwarappa, what is your opinion about dissolution of the KPL?

Parameshwarappa: As chairman-cum-managing director, I had sent a proposal for its dissolution.

Basavalingappa: Then, what is the problem?

Parameshwarappa: There is another partner who might go to the court.

Hiremath: We have a legal luminary here, Justice D M Chandrasekhar, former chief justice of Karnataka, who may enlighten us on the issue.

Chandrasekhar: There is no problem in this. Just as the government cancelled by a legislative amendment its contract with Harihar Polyfibres to supply eucalyptus wood for 99 years at a ridiculously low price, it can cancel the KPL agreement, too. If need be, I can help draft the amendment.

What Parameshwarappa tried to make out as an impossibility was quietly torpedoed by Chandrasekhar. Basavalingappa now turned to the gross violations committed by officers.

Basavalingappa: Parameshwarappa, the SPS has made serious allegations against you and it has substantiated them by documentary evidence. What do you have to say?

Since there was no way he could defend himself, Parameshwarappa remained silent.

Basavalingappa: Ok, what do you say as the chairman-cum-managing director of the KPL?

Parameshwarappa: Adkoli had better speak about it, sir.

Basavalingappa: Adkoli, have you submitted your written statement?

Adkoli: No, sir.

Basavalingappa: Why didn't you? Look, the SPS has circulated its statement to everyone here.

Adkoli: I submitted it this morning to your PA.

Basavalingappa: No, but why didn't you circulate it to all here? Well then, when the Karnataka government raised the rates of the raw material, Harihar Polyfibres went to court. The government suggested that if the factory withdrew the case from the court, it was willing to negotiate.

Adkoli: But, there is a commitment by the government to supply raw material.

Basavalingappa: Where is the commitment?

Adkoli: There is a letter from the government.

Basavalingappa: What does the letter say?

Adkoli: It says that the government doesn't want to discuss the issue since it is before court and that it is willing to discuss it if the case is withdrawn.

Basavalingappa: Do you interpret it as a commitment on the part of the government to give 75,000 acres? Adkoli, what kind of legal advisers and strategists do you have? The government has much to learn from them. How much have you spent on the agreement?

Adkoli: Only the registration fee.

Basavalingappa: What is the lease rent?

Adkoli: One rupee per hectare per year for 40 years.

Basavalingappa: Oh, your advisers must be intelligent, indeed.

Adkoli: That is a policy decision.

Basavalingappa: Where is its copy?

Adkoli: In your file, sir.

Basavalingappa: Don't tell me what's in my file. If you want to prove something, produce evidence. Well, where do you get your money from?

Adkoli: From nationalised banks.

Basavalingappa: Great, how much money have you invested?

Adkoli: The registration expenses, Rs 20 lakh in the beginning and now about another Rs 20 lakh.

Basavalingappa: So, you are getting a loan of Rs 7 crore on an investment of just Rs 40 lakh. Who is your guarantor?

Adkoli: The Karnataka government.

Basavalingappa: How nice. The government has 51 per cent shares, Harihar Polyfibres has 49 per cent. And you get 87 per cent of the usufructs. But the government provides 100 per cent guaranty. The government has a great deal to learn from the corporate sector. Adkoli, why don't you be adviser to our government? By the way, what were you before?

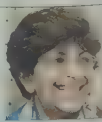
Adkoli: A forest officer.

Basavalingappa: What an excellent background for your present job.

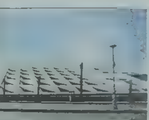
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The triumph of anarchism

Noam Chomsky deserves the recent vote that ranks him as the most important intellectual today; a thinker who is an effective counterweight and an independent critic of the state. A comment.

SHELLEY WALIA



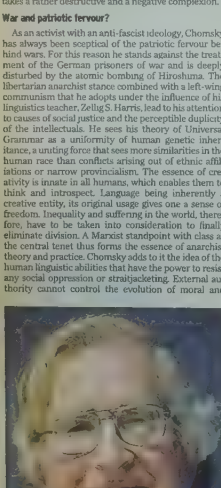
CRUCIAL: *"Protest has to be allowed in society, as we live in a world that is constantly changing."* PHOTOS: AFP

AN essay supporting the anarchist philosophy at the age of 10; hours spent at the bookshops on Manhattan's 4th Avenue engaged in anti authoritarian polemics; and then a life time spent in analysing what ails international relations in the context of the widespread infringement of human rights and the numerous wrongs which fester our society. Indeed, Chomsky deserves the recent vote that ranks him above Umberto Eco or Howard Zinn as the most important intellectual today, an intellectual who is an effective counterweight and an independent critic of the State. As he writes in a famous essay "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship": "... access to power, shared ideology, professionalisation may or may not be deplorable in themselves, but there can be no doubt that they interact so as to pose a serious threat to the integrity of scholarship in fields that are struggling for intellectual content and are thus particularly susceptible to the workings of a kind of Gresham's law. What is more, the subversion of scholarship poses a threat to society at large."

One of the repercussions of Chomsky's lifelong work is that human language and most behaviour are dependent on a huge, impulsive capacity for creativity, an "instinct for freedom" to use a term by Bakunin. This concept places Chomsky at the "frontier of psychology, philosophy and linguistics and square in the 18th-Century tradition of the Enlightenment – Rousseau, the Cartesians and other ferocious libertarians." Believing that the best way to maximise our genetically endowed freedom is through anarchism, Chomsky defines his worldview as "libertarian socialism." Such a brand of anarchism has both a historical force and stands for a deeply positive ideology that aims towards the absolute welfare of the public, though in the hands of the media and its controllers, this school of thought takes a rather destructive and a negative complexion.

War and patriotic fervour?

As an activist with an anti-fascist ideology, Chomsky has always been sceptical of the patriotic fervour behind wars. For this reason he stands against the treatment of the German prisoners of war and is deeply disturbed by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. The libertarian anarchist stance combined with a left-wing communism that he adopts under the influence of his linguistics teacher, Zellig S. Harris, lead to his attention to causes of social justice and the perceptible duplicity of the intellectuals. He sees his theory of Universal Grammar as a uniformity of human genetic inheritance, a uniting force that sees more similarities in the human race than conflicts arising out of ethnic affiliations or narrow provincialism. The essence of creativity is innate in all humans, which enables them to think and introspect. Language being inherently a creative entity, its original usage gives one a sense of freedom. Inequality and suffering in the world, therefore, have to be taken into consideration to finally eliminate division. A Marxist standpoint with class as the central tenet thus forms the essence of anarchist theory and practice. Chomsky adds to it the idea of the human linguistic abilities that have the power to resist any social oppression or straitjacketing. External authority cannot control the evolution of moral and intellectually rebellious culture. Wilhelm von Humboldt, the founder of the University of Berlin, and John Dewey, the philosopher, convinced Chomsky that political control is used by the State at the behest of the moneyed class. As argued by Adam Smith, it is all a self-promotion programme premeditated for the sole intention of profit at the cost of apathetic abuse of the masses. Chomsky remains equally impressed by other anarchist thinkers such as Emma Goldman, Pannekoek, Rudolph Rocker and Diego Abad de Santillan.



Noam Chomsky.

"EACH INDIVIDUAL, ACCORDING TO CHOMSKY, HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CREATIVE ACUMEN TO TAKE CONTROL OF HIS/HER SOCIETY."

Tradition of anarchism

Chomsky's essays and interviews throw light on the 150 years tradition of anarchism that "has sought social and economic justice without the mediation of bosses, politicians or bureaucrats." Rather than lay out a plan for any single revolutionary moment that would bring about the intended social transformation, Chomsky, along with George Woodcock, emphasises the imperceptible changes that would occur under a protracted process that would counter capitalism. No sudden demise of capitalism is envisaged. As he emphatically maintains:

> *The record of anarchist ideas, and even more, of the inspiring struggles of the people who have sought to liberate themselves from oppression and domination, must be treasured and preserved, not as a means of freezing thought and conception in some new mold but as a basis for understanding of the social reality and committed work to change it. There is no reason to suppose that history is at an end, that the current structures of authority and domination are graven in stone. It would also be a great error to underestimate the power of social forces that will fight to maintain power and privilege*

This tradition of liberal thinking has its roots in the 18th-Century Enlightenment project, often employed negatively in Eurocentric imperial strategies, but in the hands of Descartes and Rousseau, turns into a philosophy of social justice that is passed on to contemporary thinkers like Chomsky. This school of thought is blatantly anti capitalist with the underpinnings of a non-hierarchical social structure in which the workers are to be given the control of the means of production. Liberalism of the American New-Dealish brand of cut throat competition and corporate authoritarianism in the industrial sector is what the elite intellectuals take upon themselves to support, whereas the socialist anarchist stands polemically opposed to such hierarchical fascism so integral to corporate thinking which has full control of the policies of the government and is always opposed to trade unionism. The labour force is the foe and has to be constantly persuaded to switch sides on the fake trust that there is complete harmony in the workplace. This deception is cast by the media, by the flood of literature at all levels of special institutions such as schools, churches, television and cinema to make the workers believe in the "sincerity" and moral action of the State. The endeavour is to destroy all left-wing thinking and take society towards a conservative way of life. The façade of classlessness is cast over the public and many begin to believe that the State favours equal opportunities. They are not aware of the fact that income inequality is the highest in America. Interestingly, the corporations remain unscathed behind the scene, and it is the government that bears the brunt of criticism.

John McGilvray, Canadian philosopher, posits a pertinent question in his book on Chomsky: "Isn't anarchism the complete absence of any obligations towards others?" He then goes on to take the view of James Buchanan who says, "the ideal society is anarchy, in which no one man or group of men coerce another." But in the next breath he contradicts himself by saying that "any person's ideal situation is one that allows him full freedom of action and inhibits the behaviour of others so as to force adherence to his own desires. That is to say, each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves."

In the context of economic accumulation and domination this view is correct. But Chomsky disagrees:

> *In today's world, the goals of a committed anarchist should be to defend some state institutions from the attack against them, while trying at the same time to pry them open to more meaningful public participation—and ultimately, to dismantle them in a much more free society, if the appropriate circumstances can be achieved.*

A type of "voluntary socialism"

Thus, according to Chomsky, anarchism is a type of "voluntary socialism" and is synonymous with "libertarian socialism." This is not found in capitalist societies where labour is subjected to coercion when it is not allowed to own the means of production or have any effective control over the productive activity. Freedom and creativity are two privileges of human beings so essential to their need; any unjust exercise of power leads to victimisation as well as psychological depression. To fulfill human nature and to see to it that human life thrives, it becomes essential to counter any form of oppression or control. This is the reason that Chomsky supports anarchosyndicalism, which according to Mcgilvray "is defensible as an empirical claim about the nature of a society in which human beings cannot just survive but thrive, by fulfilling their natures."

Chomsky, argues McGilvray, "sees anarchosyndicalism as a modification of the basic Enlightenment conception of the person as a free and responsible agent, a modification required to meet the challenge of private power. Empowering individuals by putting control back into their hands is the best way to meet this challenge and provide a meaningful form of freedom." Chomsky suggests that the anarchist way of putting an end to the imposition of control from the top is one step towards implementing a worker's control over the means of production. Thus anarchosyndicalism used as a critical practice refuses to put all initiatives and solutions in the hands of the technocrats or bureaucrats. Each individual, according to Chomsky, has the responsibility and the creative acumen to take control of his/her society. Therefore, the idea is not to overthrow governments but to take over the corporates so that they begin to work more in favour of the people. Anarchism, in favour of the people, involves the recognition of plurality and diversity, and difference of interests, ideas and opinions. This is the Cartesian underpinning to Chomsky's thought, an impulse towards the non-systematic and highly relative and flexible character of everything in society from organisations to individuals. He takes governance inherently as a communal activity not to be left simply in the hands of the specialists who focus too narrowly on their respective areas of interest, ignoring the larger well being of society. For instance, undesirable jobs like cleaning the sewerage system, or repairing the electrical wires during a snowstorm should necessarily be mechanised, and if there still exist more undesirable jobs, the community should share them. Another solution that Chomsky suggests is that people who do unpleasant jobs should be paid the highest, not the lowest.

The examination of the history of social and political dissent demonstrates that there have been "a number of otherwise loyal, upright, law-abiding citizens who believed that they had been driven by their conscience to break the law over certain specific issues." In fact, we are all dissidents at one time or another. Protest has to be allowed in society, as we live in a world that is constantly changing, and it is by protest that the laws are changed for a better future. As Vaclav Havel writes, "You do not become a 'dissident' just because you decide one day to take up this most unusual career. You are thrown into it by your personal sense of responsibility, combined with a complex set of external circumstances. You are cast out of the existing structures and placed in a position of conflict with them. It begins as an attempt to do your work well, and ends with being branded an enemy of society." Under the overwhelming force of capitalism, bureaucracy and religious difference there are always the smouldering undercurrents of anarchism that, in the words of Rudolf Rocker underscores "a definite trend in the historic development of mankind, which strives for the free, unhindered unfolding of all the individual and social forces in life."



HERITAGE

An elevating experience

He was far-sighted and liberal. A look at the art legacy of Antonio Moscheni, in Mangalore, on the occasion of the centenary of his passing.

M. RAGHURAM



ELABORATE RENDERING: *Splendour in the St. Aloysius College chapel.* PHOTOS: THE HINDU PHOTO LIBRARY

MANGALORE. This coastal city that has shared its name with the holy city of Rome as "Rome of the East" has now one more reason to be in the spotlight, and on the global map. This time, it is because of a painter who dwelt on biblical themes and who made the city famous a century ago

What did he do? It is now the centenary year of Brother Antonio Moscheni S.J., who painted the Chapel of St. Aloysius College in Mangalore with frescoes. It has now become a pilgrimage centre not only for Christians but also for those who visit Mangalore

Moscheni died in a place called Magnamey near Verapoly in Kerala on November 15, 1905. But during most of his time in India he was in Mangalore

Painting, a passion

The city remembers this great artist as its own son Moscheni came to Mangalore in 1889 on a specific mission of painting the chapel at the college given by the Society of Jesus. Born in Stezzano near Bergamo, Italy, on January 17, 1854, the young Antonio imbibed the sentiments of tender piety from family members. Drawing was a passionate hobby of his during childhood, which later developed into an obsession. As a young man, he was known throughout Stezzano for his artistic abilities. Depictions of the battlefield were a favourite theme as there was war raging between Italy and Austria at the time

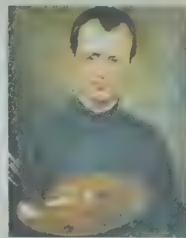
Sensing his talent, his relatives sent him to the Academicia Carrera in Bergamo where he spent a number of years learning the finer points of painting. Later, he went to Rome and studied the masterpieces at the Vatican. On his return to Stezzano, he practised the newfound profession with success and to applause. His genius was evident in the genre of fresco painting. It is these frescoes which his town has preserved and which will enshrine his name for posterity



A MURAL: *The wedding feast of Cana*

Meanwhile, the fame and attention he was basking in at Stezzano did not deter him from renouncing the prospect of a brilliant career in the materialistic world He soon sought admittance into the Society of Jesus in 1889. After a brief period of noviceship he was permitted to exercise his artistic talents. He spent a decade in adorning several churches and chapels in Italy, Dalmatia and Albania with his creations. He was then asked by the Society to paint the Chapel at St. Aloysius College that had been established in Mangalore by the Society

Moscheni was to have returned to Italy soon after he had accomplished the task but as destiny would have it he was requested to paint the newly built Holy Name Cathedral in Bombay. He completed that job in 1905 and returned to Mangalore before a sojourn at Stezzano. But there was much to be done. The Bishop of Cochin got to know about the extraordinary talent of Moscheni and wanted him to paint the beautiful cathedral he had built in Cochin



SELF-PORTRAIT: *Antonio Moscheni*

His work

However, Moscheni was in frail health having suffered a severe bout of "abdominal disturbance" Despite the best medical attention possible, he passed away on November 15, 1905, at the age of 51 leaving a legacy of frescoes in India. (He was buried in the Catholic Cemetery in Cochin). Examples of his works of art can be seen even today at the Chapel of St. Aloysius College in Mangalore, partly in Mumbai, Cochin and the altars of St. Joseph's Seminary in Mangalore

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Dr Leo D'Souza curator of the Chapel, St Aloysius College said that had Moscheni been able to go back to Stezzano, he would have reached great heights in the world of fine arts. But in a letter written to his relatives in Stezzano before his end, Moscheni expressed no regrets about his inability to return as he had found peace in doing God's work in India (Dr D'Souza had been to a special prayer meet in Stezzano last month)

Painting of a goddess

Dr D'Souza also showed *The Hindu* a beautiful and large painting of Saraswathi painted by Moscheni which adorns the library at the Father's residence in St. Aloysius campus. He said Moscheni appeared to have been moved by the qualities of th goddess and the inscription he had made at the bottom of the painting — "Satyameva Jayathe" in Devanagiri showed that he was a liberal.

The college has restored the frescoes to their original form with the help of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTAC). Perhaps the frescoes at the chapel will be the last and complete work of Moscheni. Those at the Bombay Cathedral have been painted over, while at Cochin the works could not be completed due to his fragile health

Rich colours

THE frescoes in the St Aloysius College Chapel cover virtually every inch of the altar, walls, pillars and the ceiling. The painstaking efforts of Br. Antonio Moscheni S.J., are clearly visible in the accuracy that each fresco exhibits. The chapel closely resembles the world-famous Sistine Chapel in Rome

How the chapel was painted

There are two types of paintings in the chapel. fresco and canvas. A fresco is painted on fresh wet lime plaster walls The colours get embedded in the lime plaster as it dries up. The frescoes in the chapel cover about 600 sq metres of the walls. The canvas is made of pure linen of a strong close weave. The paintings on the ceilings (about 400 sq. m) are in oil on canvas

A number of paintings in the chapel are based on the life of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, patron saint of the Institution

In Mangalore, besides the college chapel, Antonio also painted in the Fr. Muller Hospital Chapel at Kankanady, the Bishop's House Chapel at Kodialbail, the St. Joseph's Seminary Church at Jeppu and the Agrar Church near Bantwal. At the seminary, he also showed himself to be a master of the plastic art when he made several statues of clay. His work has been recognised by the Postal Department which released a stamp in his honour on January 12, 2001, with St. Aloysius College taking the initiative. In 1999, the Indian Heritage Society, Mumbai presented the "Urban Heritage Award —1998" to the Holy Name Cathedral, based on the restoration work done of Moscheni's paintings.



This stamp (Rs. 15), called the "St. Aloysius College Chapel Paintings", features a panel showing the early life of St. Aloysius.

Useful websites:

http://www.staloysius.ac.in/campus/chapel/index.php

http://www.wga.hu/tours/sistina/index.html

http://www.manresa-sj.org/stamps/3 Painters.htm

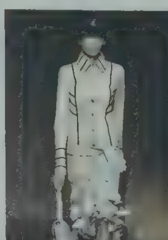
Compiled from the Internet

FASHION

Red *haute couture*

It was on the unusual catwalk of a waterborne battlecraft that some of the finest collections of two of Italy's celebrated fashion designers were showcased in Mumbai recently.

SMITA IYENGAR



PASTELS: *From the Trussardi collection.*

THE distant boom of a battleship's horn late one evening announced that I was well within restricted territory of the Naval Dockyard at Tiger Gate in the Mumbai harbor. As the megapolis shimmered in the languid dock waters, the dazzle and glaze of floodlights and surround sound preps welcomed me along the deck ramps of the aircraft carrier "IMS Vikrant". For here it was to be, a visual extravaganza of couture creations by Italian high fashion moghuls — Gianfranco Ferre and Trussardi, brought exclusively under the aegis of "Festa Italiana 2005", organised by the ever-active Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IICCI), Mumbai.

The *hoi polloi* of Mumbai's most exhibited personalities and first-name celebrities trooped aboard,-stiletto-and-stud boots onto the football-ground deck, as grounded solitory fighter jets and a lone naval helicopter lent an air of awe and admiration from civilian eyeballs. As the three open-air bar counters swiftly whisked up spirits and energisers by the drum full, excitement edged up an ascending anticipation, the 3,000-strong invitees hushed and settled down for some seductive sashaying on the ramps.

This was Mumbai's most extraordinary, unusual and dynamic fashion show, under a canopy of stars and winter skies. Fashion choreographer Marc Robinson and team, conferring with Dr Andrea Bonardi, Secretary General of IICCI, and Narinder Nayar, President (IICCI), added last minute touches to the arrangements, as the crescendo mounted, the speakers pounded fusion trance beats and the drapes bowed aside.

Tribute to the continents

Italian originality, flair for the rare and *couture* class came alive in Gianfranco Ferre's tribute to the world's continents as live innovations and designs, famous models strutting their stats sensuously, the latest creations for Europe, Africa, Oceana, Asia and the Americas presenting a dazzling canvas of superb clothes celebrated in sprinkle chiffon, chintz and sheer fabric, cleverly juxtaposed accessories adding to the originality of its inimitable creator. Weaves blended with sequins, sheer falls curled under graceful tucks, hour-glass figures asserting apparel allure, stunning embroidery heightened plain tones and crisp forms bowed to casual flair in Gianfranco Ferre's pyschedelia of magnificent designs.

The ramp was lilting ahead with Beatrice Trussardi's delightful *prêt-a-porter* repertoire, feather-soft garment leather, wearable, comfortable and chic. The simplistically rendered deft strokes of figure hugging wear was complemented by the wonders of crinkles and curls presented as ensembles of shorts and dashing tops, flowy gowns with wavy pearl rows and snappy hats that smiled down on alluring bods. Pastels took centre stage with the Trussardi watermark, the excellence of their rendition in easy-flowing evening and party wear inspiring sighs and expectant "ohhs" from fashionistas in the premier rows. It was visibly a grand spectacle of splendid choreography, professional sync and seamless co-ordination highlighted by the Italian designers' impeccable portfolio of their world-renowned designs.

For the Indian Navy and the Indian Museum Ship "(IMS) Vikrant" this memorable event meant sincere funding for its existence and welfare; for the thousands who came in to watch "Festa Italiana" 2005's Italian fashion phenomenon, it was a sensual experience not to be forgotten easily

IMPRESSIONS

Golden age of Indian silver

A European-owned firm in Madras once created waves with its range of jewellery.

VIJAYSREE VENKATRAMAN



GRAND OLD INFLUENCE: *The world of the Raj seen in a painting at the Fort Museum, Chennai* PHOTO R RAGU

THIS must be a phenomenon peculiar to our part of the world, the ritual paring down of the names of eminent personalities in various walks of life to mere initials. Why just people? Even the names of stores are reduced to acronyms which then acquire lives of their own. So, I did not think it strange when I heard a Tamil radio jingle for what I thought back then was "P.R & Sons" — an establishment that had been selling watches for ages in Madras/Chennai (they still do). Imagine my surprise at hearing the name in distant Boston, two decades later!

Recently, I was at the Harvard University's Sackler Museum on a guided tour of their new exhibit, "Silver and Shawls: India, Europe, and the Colonial Art Market" (visit: www.artmuseums.harvard.edu/exhibitions/sackler/silver_and_shawls.html). Starting with a simple, traditional Kashmiri shawl, the curator moved to the increasingly ornate ones turned out by Jacquard looms in the 18th and 19th Centuries. The silver from the same colonial period also took on new forms as a result of the cross cultural interaction

As early as 1720, British craftsmen, metal smiths and clockmakers, applied for permits to work in the newly formed presidencies. Such aspirants had to jump through many legal hoops involving large amounts of surety money before acquiring licenses to work in India. Bypassing all of this some craftsmen jumped ship, but they ran the risk of being deported back to Europe Madras, the first of the presidencies to develop a settled community, was the main destination. In fact, the oldest item showcased in the Sackler exhibit was the ceremonial seal of Fort St. George from 1770

The British workshops, which employed the local craftsmen, mainly produced sturdy, unadorned Georgian tableware. The smiths then began to embellish European objects with Indian motifs.

A hybrid style

This hybrid style, meant mainly for the local market, became hugely popular once it was displayed in the "Great Exhibition of London" in 1851. Soon after, the Suez Canal opened up, and the international exposure for the crafts increased correspondingly To cut into the lucrative market, factories in Britain made crude reproductions of the hybrid silver

A number of influential art experts — both Indian and British — encouraged the monarch-to be, the Prince of Wales, to visit India and appreciate its beauty and diversity first hand. He returned laden with magnificent presents. Their public display created a sensation. Most gifts were from the largest and most successful of the European-owned firms in Madras — the House of Peter Orr & Sons.

"Swami jewellery"

An engraved trophy [illegible] presented to the Prince [illegible] Sackler exhibit [illegible] bequeathed to the museum by its founder

In 19th-Century Italy, the unearthing of the ruins of Pompeii led to the creation of a line of "archaeological jewellery" The Castellani House put Roman gods on wearable gold items. Duly inspired, Peter Orr created their Hindu equivalent. The line was aptly called the "Swami jewellery" Many Indian rulers presented several pieces of this novel range to the Prince of Wales. Satisfied with the high quality of the creations, he appointed Peter Orr's establishment "Jew[illegible]

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

I am the real BJP.

UMA BHARATI

Party-pooper

Uma Bharati rebels against BJP brass

Uma Bharati is caught in a time warp. In her perception the BJP continues to be the ideology-bound party of the 1980s, which conducted politics by mobilising people on the Hindutva agenda. Her role in the party has always been to articulate this agenda where issues like Ram temple and common civil code dominated political discourse. Her saffron robes and backward caste origins were tailor-made for a decade shaped by ideas of mandal and masjid. Times have changed, so has the BJP. The party has realised the limitations of the Hindutva agenda, and the years in office has changed the character of the organisation. The thrust of the party campaign in Madhya Pradesh in 2003 assembly elections was bijli, sadak and paani. Bharati, who led the campaign, believes that it was her charisma and ideology that won the BJP the state. Her opinion is not shared by the party's central leadership which believes that Bharati, the individual, and the state unit including the MLAs, should act according to the diktat of the high command. When Babulal Gaur resigned as chief minister last week, the BJP central leadership picked Shivraj Singh Chauhan, an MP, and asked the MLAs to fall in line. Under Indira Gandhi, the Congress had perfected this political culture where the high command selects and sacks chief ministers at will. Unlike in the Congress, the BJP high command is not a single individual, but a handful of general secretaries and sundry others.

The 'Congressisation' of the BJP in organisational matters is a fallout of the crisis in the party ideology. For activists like Bharati, ideology takes precedence over issues of governance, and politics is about mobilising workers at the grass roots. The BJP, after its stint in office at the Centre and the states, attempts to walk the tightrope between ideology and realpolitik. This has divided the sangh parivar and eroded party discipline. The confusion over the party's future and leadership exemplified by L K Advani's remarks on Jinnah and the RSS opposition to his continuance as BJP president has allowed the likes of Bharati to challenge the party. Her earlier rebellion, in full view of TV cameras, was contained with minimal damage to the party. The threat this time is far more serious, considering that 17 MLAs rebelled at the BJP legislature party meet in Bhopal. However, Bharati should keep in mind that voters have not been kind to BJP rebels when they have walked out of the party.

Power Corrupts

Mere change in BCCI leadership will not help the game

Sharad Pawar, Union agriculture minister and an institution in Maharashtra politics, has been elected president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). He defeated Ranbir Singh Mahendra, an appointee of Jagmohan Dalmiya, bringing to an end Dalmiya's decade-long control over one of India's most wealthy and powerful organisations. Dalmiya was India's most visible sports administrator; he came across as one who determined the fates of stars and minnows alike. Like his counterparts in hockey and Olympics events, he has blurred the divide between the game and its bureaucracy. Cricketers are as known for their equations with Dalmiya as their exploits or lack of them on the field. There is no reason to believe that Pawar's reign will be fundamentally different. One set of bosses, or one patronage network, will replace another. For the game and its players to benefit from the administration, the character of BCCI needs to change. It is run like a club, whereas it needs to function like a public limited company. Pawar, a formidable mass-based politician, would appreciate that BCCI's stakeholders are the people at large, those who contribute to its television and ticket revenues. The corporate world recognises the overlap between shareholder and consumer, surely BCCI should be able to do so.

The BCCI should hold public meetings on an annual basis at Palace Grounds, Talkatora stadium or the Maidan on its finances, contracts and other activities. Its office bearers should draw a salary and not work on a voluntary basis. With the voluntary tag comes a lack of accountability that works to any bureaucracy's advantage. Politicians like Pawar, Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi and Suresh Kalmadi recognise the spin-offs of sport. They are unlikely to encourage transparency in their respective bodies. Sports bodies should be accountable to Parliament, tabling performance reports, as do statutory and public sector undertakings. At present, it would not be easy to invoke information laws against these associations. Cricket, like Bollywood, exercises great influence on the minds and emotions of the people. If cinema can, however slowly, corporatise itself with some policy help from the government, there is no reason why cricket cannot walk down the same track. Pawar's reign will be better remembered than Dalmiya's if he goes for structural change.

A Disaster Called Bt Cotton

We need GM crops that work for farmers

By SUMAN SAHAI

Just a few days ago, the government admitted for the first time that Bt cotton had indeed failed in parts of India. The agriculture minister conceded in the Rajya Sabha that Bt cotton had failed in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. He asked state governments in all cotton growing regions to order an enquiry into the quality of seeds available to farmers and the spread of spurious seeds.

At the same time, in Madhya Pradesh, the governor has asked the state government to find out the causes of the failure of Bt cotton and called for compensation to farmers. The Mahyco Monsanto and Rasi varieties of Bt cotton have reportedly failed in large parts of Madhya Pradesh causing serious losses to farmers. A report from Nimad district states that Bt cotton is causing allergic reactions in those coming into contact with it and cattle have perished near Bt cotton fields in another district.

Reports of the failure of Bt cotton have been coming in steadily after the harvest of the first crop of 2002-03. Gene Campaign's study of the first Bt cotton harvest in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra had shown that 60% of the farmers who cultivated Bt cotton in these regions had suffered such losses that they could not even recover their investment.

Based on the Andhra government's report of Bt cotton failure, the state has banned the sale of the Mahyco-Monsanto varieties because it caused large scale losses to farmers. Recently, a 20-member group of NGOs conducted surveys in several cotton-growing regions and found the seed had failed to germinate in many places like Tamil Nadu, so farmers had to buy expensive seed twice or thrice to sow their crops.

In addition, wilt which started in Bt cotton fields in Madhya Pradesh was found to be spreading. The reasons for this are not yet known.

In addition to these reports came scientific data that showed why the Bt cotton crop was failing in India. The Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur, published a paper to show that India's Bt cotton technology is faulty and inadequate to protect the cotton crops where the major pest is the bollworm. The Bt technology used here was created for the US, to protect America's



cotton crops against its major pest, the tobacco budworm, not the bollworm.

According to the CICR study, poor Bt cotton performance in India could be due to the fact that in India, Bt cotton is produced as hybrids, not true varieties, as in China, Australia and South Africa. Indian regulators must also answer why hybrids are promoted, when they will force the farmer to buy seeds for every new planting? Why did the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), the principal regulating authority, not take the decision that only true breeding varieties of Bt cotton would be permitted in India, not only because they perform better but also because they would be a cheaper option for farmers who could save seeds for the next harvest?

Along with these developments is the continuing spread of illegal Bt cotton varieties which began with the appearance of Navbharat 151 in Gujarat some years ago but which has since proliferated into a number of variants being bred in several parts of the country. Now, Bt cotton varieties are being sold which do not even contain the Bt gene. Farmers are being fooled by unscrupulous seed providers. No action has been taken against them by the GEAC.

The GEAC has failed to check the problem of illegal seeds, it refuses to answer queries from the public or share information with them. It has further refused to press for compensation for losses suffered by the farmers, instead, it has continued to release a slew of new Bt cotton varieties even though it knows that the cultivation is taking place without the implementation of the mandated insect refuge management strategy that the GEAC itself has prescribed.

Even as these issues remain unaddressed, comes the report that the GEAC has already approved the first stage of tests of the new Monsanto cotton, Bollgard II which contains not one Bt gene, as the older varieties, but two. Monsanto has been given permission for the final field trials for Bollgard II, which it boasts is 10 times better than the older Bt cotton. Scientific papers in prestigious journals have already pointed out that the one gene Bt cotton and the two gene Bt cotton cannot be cultivated in the same region, they cannot coexist.

The Bt cotton saga has gone on long enough, so has the obduracy of government's regulatory agencies and their anti-farmer stance. What will it take to get a policy on GM crops in this country that work for the farmers, not against them?

If Bt cotton is a technology that could benefit our farmers, it should be developed for Indian conditions, farmers must be adequately trained in the use of this complex and alien technology and provisions for compensation in the event of crop failure must be rigorously enforced.

The writer is convenor, Gene Campaign

'How can you talk to someone with a gun'

Ghulam Nabi Azad took over as Jammu and Kashmir chief minister a few weeks ago. Azad, the first Congress CM of the state in 30 years, tells Aditi that his administration is trying its best to provide relief and rehabilitation in quake-hit areas of the state and control insurgency



■ Thousands are waiting for relief. What are you doing?

Relief operations are on. Initially, it was rescue and immediate relief in terms of saving lives and medical aid, and providing basic shelter like tents. Now we are planning long term.

■ But what have you done so far, especially since most buildings have either been razed to the ground or are unfit to live in?

We have given 30,000 blankets, we are constructing 104 prefabricated structures of community halls. Six of them have already come up. These community halls are cold-proof and have been brought from other parts of the country. Each has a provision for providing shelter to 200 people. We are also providing tin sheets and wood beams for construction at the road head.

■ There are areas in Uri where everything is destroyed and work is impossible. Poonch has also been totally ignored?

We have identified about five villages in Uri with a population of 500 to 600 people and another 900 families, who will have to be relocated at least for the winter. I do agree that Poonch was ignored but I have given all departments a deadline to execute at least the short-term plan for Uri, Tangdhar and Poonch.

■ Violence is on the rise since you took over on November 2. You have said these are terrorists and they should be called so. Is that a paradigm shift in the approach towards insurgency?

Every time there is a new person in office, it has happened. The first car bomb took place when Farooq Abdullah took over. Militants are hard-core terrorists. They are killers and just killers. For any government, the safety of the people, their well-being and security are of prime importance. No concessions will be granted and action as deemed fit will be taken by the police and security forces.

■ What about talks with groups like the Hizbul Mujahideen?

Talks can continue at all levels but as far as the armed groups go, how can you talk to someone with a gun?

■ You said that one of your priorities was weeding out corruption but a senior Congress minister is now under question.

The accountability commission has issued notice but so far nobody has been indicted. They have asked the minister to present his side by December 8.

CONVERSATIONS WITH READERS

Finger Furore

There has been a huge furore over Greg Chappell's "fingering" at the Kolkata crowd. But no one seems to be denouncing the bad behaviour of the crowd, which by all accounts, was rooting for South Africa.

This display of parochialism, triggered just because Sourav wasn't selected for the team, does not speak well of our patriotism.

It was sad that the crowd booed cricketing legend Greg Chappell and the ever-solid Indian 'wall', Rahul Dravid, just to show solidarity with one individual.

This is not the first time the Eden Gardens' crowds have behaved in such a deplorable manner. Several recent incidents including burning stands have led to stoppage and cancellation of matches. It is this boorish behaviour that first needs to be denounced.

Kolkatans must be cautioned that they will not get to see another match at Eden Gardens if they continue with such churlish behaviour. As for Chappell, while he should not have done what he did, it was probably a spontaneous outburst of emotion provoked by the crowd. Should we expect a tiger to show the character of a cow?

Nitin Gokarn, via e-mail

II

It is ridiculous that Indian Cricket board is defending Greg Chappell for his actions in Kolkata. It shows that India has yet to escape the heritage of the divide and rule policy set by the Britishers. Only now we are dancing to an Australian's tune. Chappell should be asked to give a written apology, and mind his behaviour in future. India should stop politicising cricket and never appoint an Australian coach in the future.

Reena Mukherjee, via e-mail

Death Too Merciful

This is with reference to the double murder at Borivli and the punishment given to the perpetrators. It may sound a little primitive, but I strongly feel that the accused got away too lightly even with the noose hanging over their heads. People who commit bestial crimes such as killing the old and defenceless or an innocent infant whose life has yet to blossom must be so brutally punished they spend the rest of their lives remembering it.

M Kumar, via e-mail

Bravo, Singhania

One more Indian has dared to defy the sky. Dr Vijay Singhania has not only done India proud, but also set an example for the younger generation who dream but are not confident enough to make those dreams come true. What a marvellous feat to achieve, especially at his age. Singhania's name is already amongst the rollcall of 'daring entrepreneurs' and will now be added to the record books. Mr Singhania, your courage, determination and willpower has inspired us all. Hats off to you, sir.

Kajal Chheda, via e-mail

Letters to this column should be addressed to **Letters** c/o Resident Editor, The Times of India, D N Road, Mumbai 400001, email: toieditorial@timesgroup.com

Giving Back Dignity

By G K GUPTA

BRIEF CASE

The Himalayan bear with shaggy black hair had just finished a performance much to the delight of urchins and bystanders. After he pocketed the small bounty from his battered bowl, I struck up a conversation with the septuagenarian madari who introduced himself as Naseer. He claimed that his forefathers had been in a similar vocation from the time of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor of India and had earned royal patronage. Taking pride in his profession, he said Munna bhalu was like his son. Was it the same Munna who had made headlines in India years ago when he had participated in the Festival of India in France? Charges of ill-treatment had been levelled, articles of the Wildlife Protection Act were avidly invoked and the Supreme Court had ordered Munna to be examined by vets. After all these years, it was interesting to meet the pair of man and beast that had been to France as official delegates at the Festival of India. Naseer recounted his experiences in France, and I learned that there had been more to the trip than just the festival.

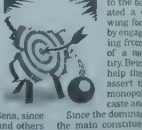
To cash in on the interest created by the festival, an Indian restaurant in Paris engaged Naseer and Munna to dance in front of the restaurant for a few francs and entertain the diners. However, events took a sudden dismal turn — one day the Himalayan prodigy disappeared from his cage. Naseer worried that Munna would starve on his own. Before long, some animal activists claimed they had kidnapped the bear to give it back its dignity. Meanwhile, Naseer wondered if his Munna had actually fallen to the charms of a Vosgian Munni, and was courting her in his new-found freedom. But his speculations were put to rest when Munna reappeared as mysteriously as he had disappeared, presumably returned by his kidnappers. They had done their job, they had focused attention on the plight of the animal and returned its dignity — or so they thought. Naseer's foreign jaunt was over, and he returned to India. And Munna is once again performing on the streets of Delhi.

Inheriting the Bihar dilemma

By PRAKASH LOUIS

Gautama Buddha had predicted Patliputra would become a great and wealthy city, but would be threatened by three dangers — fire, flood and feud. Fire and flood are recurrent in Bihar. Feud and conflicts have become part of life. Operation Jailbreak carried out by the Naxals in Jehanabad on November 13 reiterates that caste and feudal struggles in Bihar are inevitable. And this has direct implications for the new government under Nitish Kumar.

Operation Jailbreak has thrown up many crucial facts about Bihar. Contrary to common belief, Naxalite organisations are not in decline. Instead, their presence is felt in a modified form. The Maoist Coordination Centre (MCC) and People's War (PW) united in 2003 and named themselves Maoist Unity, and one of their first assignments was to blow up the Bodh Gaya math. The math had come to symbolise the feudal and casteist society in central Bihar. The Jehanabad jailbreak underscores the power of this unified group.



Fear loomed large about a backlash from the Ranvir Sena, since their leader was shot dead and others taken captive from the jail. Ranvir Sena, a private caste militia, which came into existence in 1994, was engaged in an internecine war with the Naxals to protect the landed gentry. From 1995 to 2000 alone, it committed over 30 massacres in central Bihar. After 2001, it lay low, but it is not a spent force.

Nitish seems to have his priorities right: Good governance, basic infrastructure, improving law and order and creating a business-friendly atmosphere. The last two decades of political sociology in Bihar have proved that social empowerment is a major political agenda not only in electoral politics, but also in grass-roots politics. Lalu Prasad carried forward the social empowerment agenda initiated by Karpoori Thakur. It is illogical to expect from a person, himself a product of social engineering, to move on to economic empowerment.

Nitish Kumar has prioritised economic empowerment. Economic reform is one of the most pressing needs of Bihar. Agricultural reform, and in extension economic development, is not possible without land reform in the sense perceived by the common masses of Bihar. If the new regime pushes its agenda of economic reform, it will come directly in conflict with the constituencies that have voted them to power. In a way, this election result is the reassertion of the agenda of the dominant caste and middle class of Bihar, who felt suffocated under the social empowerment regime of Lalu.

Two other inter-related socio-political issues will continue to haunt the new regime. BJP, the alliance partner in the new government, has come to be perceived as a political formation that uses religion for politics. There is no denying that it was Lalu who blocked the RSS-isation of Bihar's society, economy and polity. But his relegation of economic empowerment to the background has created a vacuum for right-wing forces to fill the void by engaging in nation building from the point of view of a mono-religious identity. Being in the saddle will help the communal forces assert the hegemony and monopoly of the dominant caste and feudal elements.

Since the dominant castes have been the main constituency of NDA, it is certain that Bihar will witness their resurgence. If Nitish Kumar has to carry the agenda of economic empowerment, he will have to take some hard decisions on reform in land, labour, education and governance. But this will bring his regime in conflict with the dominant castes and feudal elements. Assertion of backward castes has come full circle with the ascent of Nitish Kumar. He will have to address specific issues of the backward castes if he has to build his own political and social constituency. The Dalits and downtrodden of Bihar, who under the previous regime have been introduced to social empowerment, have pinned their hopes on Nitish. Will he risk his political future for addressing the short-term interests of various constituencies, or will he keep the focus on economic empowerment while at the same time delineating a course of action for social empowerment? The answer will determine development, democracy and governance in Bihar.

The writer is director, Bihar Social Institute, Patna

Sacred Space

Self-esteem

Increase self-esteem and confidence. Achieve what you really want through yoga and mind-control techniques. No prior knowledge of yoga is required.

Swami Sivananda

✦

The role of 'ego in worldly life differs from its role in spiritual life. Ego means self-esteem, pride, vanity etc. To lead a successful worldly life, self-esteem is a positive virtue, but vanity is a negative quality. For spiritual practice, ego is the barrier and should be crushed.

Ram V Chandran

✦

You yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.

The Buddha

✦

Go out in the world and work like money doesn't matter. Sing as if no one is listening. Love as if you have never been hurt and Dance as if no one is watching.

Author Unknown

✦

Self-esteem isn't everything; it's just that there's nothing without it.

Gloria Steinem

✦

The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself. It is not in your environment, it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others, it is in yourself alone.

Orison S Marden

Nurture the Will to Live With Deep Meditation

By OSHO

THE SPEAKING TREE

As I see it, AIDS is not a disease in the same category as other diseases; hence the danger of it. It is, basically, the incapability to resist diseases. To me it is a reminder that humanity is losing the will to live.

Whenever a person loses the will to live, his resistance falls, because the body follows the mind. The body is a conservative servant of the mind, it serves the mind religiously. If the mind loses the will to live, it will be reflected in the body by the dropping of resistance against sickness.

To me it is very significant. It has nothing to do with either heterosexuality or homosexuality. It has certainly something to do with sex. And why has it something to do with sex? The will to live is rooted in sex. If the will to live disappears, then sex will be the most vulnerable area of life to invite death.

As it appears to me, the disease is spiritual. Man has come to a point where he finds the road ends.

Going back is meaningless because all that he has seen, lived, shows him there was nothing in it; it has all proved meaningless. Going ahead, there is no road: facing him is the abyss. In this situation if he loses the will to live, it is not unexpected.

An unwanted child who feels orphaned shrinks and dies because his will to live never sprouts forth. Man suddenly feels that he is an existential orphan. This feeling makes your will to live disappear.

While you are living, hoping, being ambitious, the morrow remains a hope so that you can forget all the yesterdays which were meaningless, you can forget today which is also meaningless — when the sun rises, everything will be different. All the religions have been giving you that hope. Those religions have failed.

Politicians could not help. They were never intending to help; it was just a strategy to exploit you. Man is becoming mature, aware that he has been cheated by the priests, by politicians. When your sexuality starts shrinking you are really hoping that something happens and you will go into eternal silence. Your resistance is not there.

I am trying to give you a hope here and now. Why bother about tomorrow? For centuries the tomorrow has been keeping you somehow dragging, and it has failed you. I am trying to make this very moment fulfilling, a contentment so deep that there is no need for the will to live.

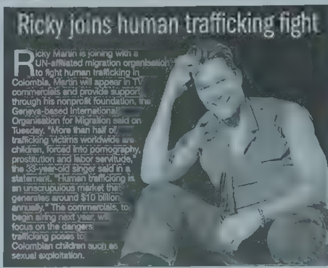
The will to live is needed because you are not alive. The will keeps picking you up, you go on slipping down. I am not trying to give you a new will to live. I am simply trying to teach you to live without any will, to live joyously. And everybody is capable of living joyously. It is the morrow that goes on poisoning you.

Forget yesterdays, forget tomorrows. This is our day! Let us celebrate it and live it.

Losing your immunity is existential sickness, that's why the medical profession is going to be in tremendous difficulty unless they try to understand the very root. And for that, medicine will not help, only meditation can help.

[illegible]

AROUND THE WORLD



Ricky joins human trafficking fight

Ricky Martin is joining with a UN-affiliated migration organisation to fight human trafficking in Colombia. Martin will appear in TV commercials and provide support through his nonprofit foundation, the Geneva-based International Organisation for Migration said on Tuesday. "More than half of trafficking victims worldwide are children, forced into pornography, prostitution and labor servitude," the 33-year-old singer said in a statement. "Human trafficking is an unscrupulous market that generates around $10 billion annually." The commercials, to begin airing next year, will focus on the dangers trafficking poses to Colombian children such as sexual exploitation.

Revamped Queen plans music tour: British Rock band Queen, with Paul Rodgers subbing for late singer Freddie Mercury, said Tuesday it will begin a six-week tour of North America on March 3 in Miami. Rodgers, former lead singer with Bad Company and Free, joined Queen guitarist Brian May and drummer Roger Taylor onstage for the first time in the UK last fall and they have toured together in Europe and Japan, billed as Queen + Paul Rodgers. They played stopover gigs in New Jersey and Los Angeles earlier this year. The tour will also features video footage of Mercury, who died of AIDS in 1991

Tim Burton to direct Jim Carrey in Ripley's tale: Jim Carrey is to play the founder of the *Ripley's Believe It Or Not* chronicle of oddities in a new movie to be directed by Tim Burton. Carrey, 43, the star of last year's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *The Truman Show* and *The Mask* will play Robert Ripley in the Paramount Pictures movie scheduled for release in 2007, Daily Variety said

Gregory Peck's Hollywood star is stolen: Gregory Peck's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame was stolen by someone who cut it out of the sidewalk where it had honoured the actor for more than four decades, officials said on Tuesday. "They just left a big hole out there," said Johnny Grant, 82, who serves as Hollywood's honourary mayor and oversees ceremonies honoring star recipients. "Somebody went out there with a cement saw and carved it out of the black terrazzo." Peck's star is the fourth star to be stolen since the Walk of Fame was begun in 1960. Some 2,200 stars are now part of the walkway. Peck, who died in 2003 at age 87, won an Oscar for his role in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

George Michael, partner to seal relationship: George Michael said on Tuesday that he and his longtime partner will make their relationship official under new British legislation offering gays many of the legal protections available to married couples. "I'm sure Kenny (Goss) and I will be doing the old legal thing, but we won't be doing the whole veil and gown thing," Michael said at a screening of a documentary about his career. "It'll be relatively soon after it comes in, probably early next year." The singer said he and Goss, who have been a couple for nearly ten years, planned a "small, private ceremony."

Moss may triple her earnings: Supermodel Kate Moss, may have most of her major contracts after pictures of her snorting cocaine were splashed all over the tabloids, but with a little help from her friends, in particular, Stella McCartney, and with contracts with top names like Roberto Cavalli, Calvin Klein, Rimmel, Virgin Mobile and Pirelli, she could end up earning up to 12 million pounds over the next 12 months, which is triple the amount she earned before

Diamond doesn't trust computers: Singer Neil Diamond has revealed that in the age of high speed technology, he still sticks to the old fashioned pen and paper when it comes to writing his songs because he just doesn't trust computers. The singer said that he was so fascinated with computers that when he bought his first one, he started writing his autobiography. However, he learnt his lesson when the computer crashed and all the work was lost

Patrick snubs Scarlett: Film star Patrick Swayze has said that he is extremely sorry for his apparent snub of Scarlett Johansson, and wants to make it up to her. The 21-year-old was shocked when she approached the 'Ghost' star at a party to tell him how much she admired him, and was quite taken aback by the 53-year-old actor's response. "I actually ran up to Patrick at a party, and said, 'Hi, it's so nice to meet you. I just wanted you to know I've really liked *Dirty Dancing* since I was little.' He replied, 'That was a long time ago.' I shrunk into a corner, cried and went home," she said



Charlize draws her lessons from lizards

Oscar winning actress Charlize Theron has revealed that she took running tips from lizards, so that she would be able to give a realistic on-screen performance in the movie adaptation of the comic book, 'Aeon Flux.' The movie's stunt coordiantor, Charlie Croughwell, said that a scene in the movie required the actress to run on all fours with her stomach barely inches from the ground, and that the actress studied the running of geckos, to help her with her movements. As for Theron, the actress declared that the experience had not creeped her out in any way, as she had often played with the slithery lizards while growing up

Pretty Woman tops list of the highest-paid

Los Angeles: She traded Hollywood for motherhood and did not star in a movie this year, but Julia Roberts still ranks as Hollywood's highest-paid female actor at $20 million a film, according to an annual power list. The Hollywood Reporter, an entertainment paper on Wednesday published its annual list of the top-earning actresses, putting Nicole Kidman just behind Roberts at No 2. Kidman commands an estimated $16 million to $17 million per movie, the Reporter said.

The No 3 and No 4 spots were held by Reese Witherspoon, currently starring in Oscar hopeful *Walk the Line*, and Drew Barrymore, both of whom take in $15 million a movie

Roberts, with her broad smile and infectious all-American style, earned an Oscar for playing feisty consumer advocate Erin Brockovich in the 2000 movie of the same name. Her ability to lure audiences into theatres in movies like *Ocean's Eleven* put her in the ranks of $20 million-plus movie actors, a realm previously reserved for hugely famous actors like Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and others

Three actors, Renee Zellweger, Angelina Jolie and Cameron Diaz, all had salaries estimated between $10 million and $15 million per film, the No 5, 6 and 7 positions on the list

Jodie Foster, who starred in the recent thriller *Flight Plan*, returned to the list for the first time since 2002 at No 8 with an asking price from $10 million to $12 million. Charlize Theron made her debut in the No 9 spot at a flat $10 million, and the No 10 position belonged to Jennifer Aniston, who was said to make $9 million a movie. Reuters

Julia makes Broadway debut

New York: Actors Paul Rudd and Bradley Cooper will be Julia Roberts' co-stars when the actress opens on Broadway in a revival of Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*

The play, directed by Joe Mantello, begins preview performance on March 28 at the Bernard B Jacobs Theatre

Roberts will be making her Broadway debut with the play, which features three actors portraying multiple characters. It concerns two interlocking stories taking place in different decades and how parents can affect the lives of their children



OTHER BIG EARNERS



Nicole Kidman $16-17 million

Reese Witherspoon $15 million

Drew Barrymore $15 million

Renee Zellweger $10-15 million

Dads prefer office work to changing nappies

By Steve Doughty

They pride themselves on being hands-on parents and are desperate to spend more time with their children. That, at least, is the image of the modern father. But researchers have found it is a long way from reality. In fact the time that fathers spend looking after their children has fallen over the past 40 years, they believe. More mothers than ever are doing the lion's share of childcare

The conclusions undermine the claim that fathers want to take a greater role in the family home and throw doubt on the idea that more of them are already knee deep in nappies

The study by researchers at the influential Institute of Education at London University suggests men would rather be at work making money to keep the family than at home looking after the children

It was based on surveys carried out in 1991 and again in 2001 and 2002. The results suggest the time fathers devote to caring for their children has been falling since the 1960s. Researchers declared, "Findings do not support the notion of a 'new dad' who spends more time with his children. In fact, they seem to suggest that fathers today are actually taking a slightly smaller role in childcare." The researchers said, "Perhaps this is the 'new dad' a father who wants to be more involved in his child's upbringing, but, due to other pressures, finds this is not possible."

England cricketer Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff is a good example. The 27-year old father of one and one on the way recently spoke of his dread at leaving his family behind during the team's tour of Pakistan

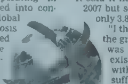
Security concerns meant he was unable to take his wife and daughter. His schedule means frequent absences from home. England start a tour of India and Australia in 2006 and go on to the West Indies in 2007. Daily



TAKING IT EASY

Private firms must help in global fight: UN

Multinational firms operating in Africa must be pressed into contributing to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria if the cash-strapped agency is to succeed in its battle on the continent, an United Nations envoy said



Stephen Lewis, the United Nations special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, said the fund is facing its worst-ever financial crisis and that the private sector has an obligation to assist, especially in Africa, the continent most affected by the deadly disease. "It's time to go after the private sector in no uncertain terms," he told AFP here on the sidelines of a Rwandan-hosted regional AIDS conference ahead of World AIDS Day

Lewis said the first companies to be targeted should be "the multinationals in oil, minerals and diamonds who've benefited so much from the African continent and the pharmaceutical industry that was so slow to reduce its prices."

He said these firms should contribute 0.7% of their pre tax profits to the fund in a programme that could be phased in over the next 10 years, ultimately raising billions of dollars

The Geveva-based fund, set up in 2002 as a joint public-private clearing house for receiving and distributing donor money to developing countries, last week appealed for donors to make up major funding shortfalls

It said it needs $7.1 billion for 2006 and 2007 but so far has received pledges of only 3.8 billion for this period.

"I think the Global Fund is facing the gravest financial crisis since it was created," Lewis said, calling existing private sector efforts with their African employees insufficient to ease the devastating effects of AIDS. "But if corporate social responsibility is to mean anything it must be reflected in direct contributions to the fund." Lewis said "There is still not recognition of how serious this is," he said. AFP



WORLD AIDS DAY

Activists, doctors sue South African govt

South African activists and doctors have sued the government for not taking action against a prominent "AIDS dissident" doctor who promotes untested vitamins to fight the epidemic, officials said recently. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the South African Medical Association (SAMA) said Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang had failed the public by allowing Matthias Rath to continue operating in South Africa

"Matthias Rath ... is using poor, particularly black people as guinea pigs ... and the government is doing nothing," TAC general secretary Sipho Mthathi told a news briefing. The TAC and the SAMA filed papers in the Cape High Court demanding Tshabalala-Mismang and the state Medicines Control Council act against Rath, who runs multivitamin trials on AIDS patients in Cape Town's Khayelitsha township.

Critics say Rath's vitamin trials have not been approved by a research ethics committee and discourage people from using anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs, which slow the progress of AIDS. Tshabalala-Msimang has refused to condemn Rath, although the MCC is probing claims the foundation's trials are illegal. Reuters

Saudi Arabia seeks to break taboo

Conservative Saudi Arabia, where nearly 11,000 cases of HIV/AIDS have been reported, is speaking out about the once-taboo subject, as government and UN bodies run awareness campaigns to fight the disease

In Jeddah, World AIDS Day will be marked on Thursday by ambulances driving through the Red Sea city handing out booklets "containing educational information about HIV and answering the most frequently asked questions," Sanaa Abbas Filemban, director of King Saud Hospital and coordinator of the HIV programme in the Jeddah region, said.

health ministry official said the cumulative reported number of HIV-positive patients since the first case was diagnosed in Saudi Arabia in 1984 was 10,924, with Saudis numbering 2,005 and expatriates 8,919. One third have died. The male-female ratio is three to one and most cases were in the western Jeddah and Mecca regions.

Statistics show that 1,111 people, including 262 Saudis, tested HIV positive in 2004. World AIDS Day activities in Jeddah, where 60% of HIV/AIDS cases have been reported, would run through December 13 and include the distribution of educational material in schools, and visits by doctors to places where the young gather. AFP

World's smallest hole drilled

London: New technology developed by engineering experts from the University of Cardiff is set to revolutionise medical and electronic engineering, thro-ugh the creation of machinery which holds the ability to drill holes narrower than a strand of human hair

According to the experts, the new technology enables them to drill holes of 22 microns (0.022 mm) in stainless steel and other materials. This is narrower than a human hair whose thickness usually varies between 80 microns (0.08 mm) down to 50 microns (0.05 mm)

According to the University, the process was achieved through the creation of a minute electrode, with a diameter of only 6 microns (0.006 mm), which was itself produced by manufacturing a highly precise wire electrode discharge grinder

Frank Marsh the marketing director at Cardiff's Manufacturing Engineering Centre said that the holes being drilled with the new EDM (Electro-Discharge Machining) process could be the smallest in the world. He added that though it had been possible to dig narrow holes using lasers, the holes from the EDM process were of a better quality

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A recent Passport size colour photograph should be affixed on the application and attested copies of all testimonials should also be attached. Copies of all documents to prove eligibility for the post must be enclosed. Envelop containing the application should be scribed with the post applied for

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Preserving poets' voices

Historic recordings of Robert Browning and Alfred Tennyson reading their own poems feature in an online archive launched on Wednesday that aims to preserve the voices of contemporary English-language poets.

The Poetry Archive, under development since 1999, is the brainchild of British Poet Laureate Andrew Motion and Richard Carrington, a recording engineer specialising in the spoken word.

Harold Pinter, Seamus Heaney and Margaret Atwood are among the writers the archive has already recorded reading their poetry. "Actors may (or may not) read poems well, but poets have unique rights to their work, and unique insights and interests to offer as we hear their idiom, pacing, tone and emphases," said Motion

"The readings are at once instant in their appeal, and lingering in their impact." Some poets like Browning and Tennyson were recorded after the introduction of the phonograph at the end of the 19th century, but many more were not, including Thomas Hardy, AE Houseman and DH Lawrence. The archive's aim is to make sure such omissions never happen again

The earliest recording on the site is Browning reciting part of a poem at a dinner in 1889, the year of his death. Reuters

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US govt delays prisoner release

Tim Golden

A long-running effort by the Bush administration to send home many of the terror suspects held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, has been stymied in part because of concern among United States officials that the prisoners may not be treated humanely by their own governments, officials said.

Administration officials have said they hope eventually to transfer or release many of the roughly 490 suspects now held at Guantanamo. As of February, military officials said, the Pentagon was ready to repatriate more than 150 of the detainees once arrangements could be made with their home countries.

But those arrangements have been more difficult to broker than officials in Washington anticipated or have previously acknowledged, raising questions about how quickly the administration can meet [illegible] tion operations at Guantanamo. "The Pentagon has no plans to release any detainees in the immediate future," said a Defence Department spokesman, Lt Cmdr Jeffrey Gordon of the navy.

The military has so far sent home 267 detainees from Guantanamo after finding that they had no further intelligence value.

Most of those who remain are considered more dangerous militants, many also come from nations with poor human rights records and ineffective justice systems. But Washington's insistence on humane treatment for the detainees in their native countries comes after years in which Guantanamo priosn has been assailed as a symbol of abuse and hypocrisy a fact not lost on the governments with which the US is now negotiating.

"It is kind of ironic that the US is placing conditions on other countries that it would not follow itself in Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib," said a Middle Eastern diplomat from a country involved in the [illegible] NYT NEWS SERVICE

New Nepal PM talks peace

GP Koirala Assumes Office, Invites Maoists For A Dialogue

Kathmandu: Nepal's new Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala on Sunday invited Maoist rebels to talks to try to bring peace to the Himalayan nation, days after King Gyanendra bowed to pro-democracy protests and returned power to political parties.

Koirala's comments to parliament came as he initiated a debate over holding elections for an assembly to draw up a new constitution to decide the future of the monarchy.

"I urge the Maoists, who have announced a three month ceasefire, to stop violence now and come for talks immediately," said Koirala, who was sworn in as prime minister by the king earlier in the day.

"The establishment of peace and democracy is the national aspiration," the 81 year-old veteran politician said as lawmakers thumped their desks in approval.

It was the first public speech by the ailing leader since he was named as prime minister last week by an alliance of seven political parties opposed to the king's absolute rule.



[illegible]'S POWER King Gyanendra administers oath of office to Prime Minister GP Koirala in Kathmandu on Sunday

Nepal, one of the 10 poorest countries in the world, was in chaos and its aid and tourism dependent economy was in tatters, Koirala told the 205-member house. He urged the seven political parties to unite to address the country's problems as it goes through a transition.

"The Nepalese people have achieved new fame in their history through their popular protests," Koirala said referring to a campaign against the king's 14-month rule which culminated this month in mass protests and street battles with troops across the mountainous country.

As Koirala spoke inside parliament, about 150 protesters gathered outside its gates shouting, "Hang the murderers", "Hang the killers", "Long live democracy."

Political parties are under popular pressure to abolish the monarchy and turn Nepal into a republic. This is also a key demand of Maoist rebels to end a decade-old insurgency in which more than 13,000 people have been killed.

Sunday's parliament session began hours after the king, humbled by the protests and facing possible moves to abolish the monarchy, administered Koirala the oath of office at the Narayanhity royal palace.

Koirala, who is suffering from bronchitis, was due to be sworn in on Friday but he was too ill to attend the ceremony, causing it to be put off. On Sunday, Koirala was accompanied by his doctor to the palace ceremony.

Last week, the king appointed Koirala as prime minister on the recommendation of the seven parties. AGENCIES

WORLD DIGEST

Iranian forces entered Iraq, says Baghdad: Iraq on Sunday accused Iranian forces of having over the last 24 hours entered Iraqi territory and shelled Kurdish PKK guerrillas in the northern Arbil province. "Iranian forces hit a border area called Haj Umran and then entered five kilometres into Iraqi territory and hit the area of Lollan with heavy artillery with 180 shells targeting PKK positions," it said. No casualty figures were immediately available. The attack is the second Iranian offensive against the Kurdistan Workers' Party guerilla group (PKK) in 10 days. The group is fighting for the creation of an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey.

Chinese internet activists challenge censorship: A coalition of Chinese web activists has launched a petition decrying censorship of the internet and challenging the legality of government information controls on China's more than 100 million net users. Hundreds of citizens signed the petition along with representatives of 13 local Chinese web sites recently closed or targeted by censors. It began circulating on Saturday via e-mail and overseas Chinese-language web sites unaffected by domestic censorship. The signatories said China's constitution grants citizens freedom of expression and publication, and those rights "should be respected and protected."

Terror group threatens to 'slaughter' Palestinian leaders: Security has been beefed up for the Fatah leadership, including Palestinian Authority(PA) Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, after an unknown group claiming affiliation to Al Qaida distributed leaflets here threatening to 'slaughter' them, a media report said. "We hereby declare that we have begun operating in Palestine," the leaflet distributed in the name of Al Tawhid and Jihad said heaping praises on Osama bin Laden and Abu Musab Zarqawi. "We have decided to revive the sunnah (one of the sources of Islamic jurisprudence) of slaughter against these people to avoid dissension," the leaflet was quoted as saying.

Castro, Chavez, Morales reject US trade, sign separate pact

Havana: Bolivia's new left leaning President strengthened his government's ties with Cuba and Venezuela, forming a bloc that rejects US-backed free trade and promises a socialist version of regional commerce and cooperation. With Cuba's Fidel Castro and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez seated nearby, President Evo Morales on Saturday signed an updated version of the so-called Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, adding Bolivia as a third member. "In Cuba and Venezuela we find unconditional solidarity," Morales said. "They are the best allies for changing Bolivia."

As part of the new alliance, Cuba promised to send Bolivia doctors to provide medical care to poor people, and teachers to conduct literacy campaigns. Venezuela will send gasoline to the Andean nation and set up a $100 million fund for development programmes and a $30 million fund for other social projects. Cuba and Venezuela also agreed to buy all of Bolivia's soybeans, recently left without markets after Colombia signed a free trade pact with the US.

Dressed in his typical olive green uniform, Castro, who turns 80 in August, said sharing the spotlight with two younger, like-minded leaders "makes me the happiest man in the world."

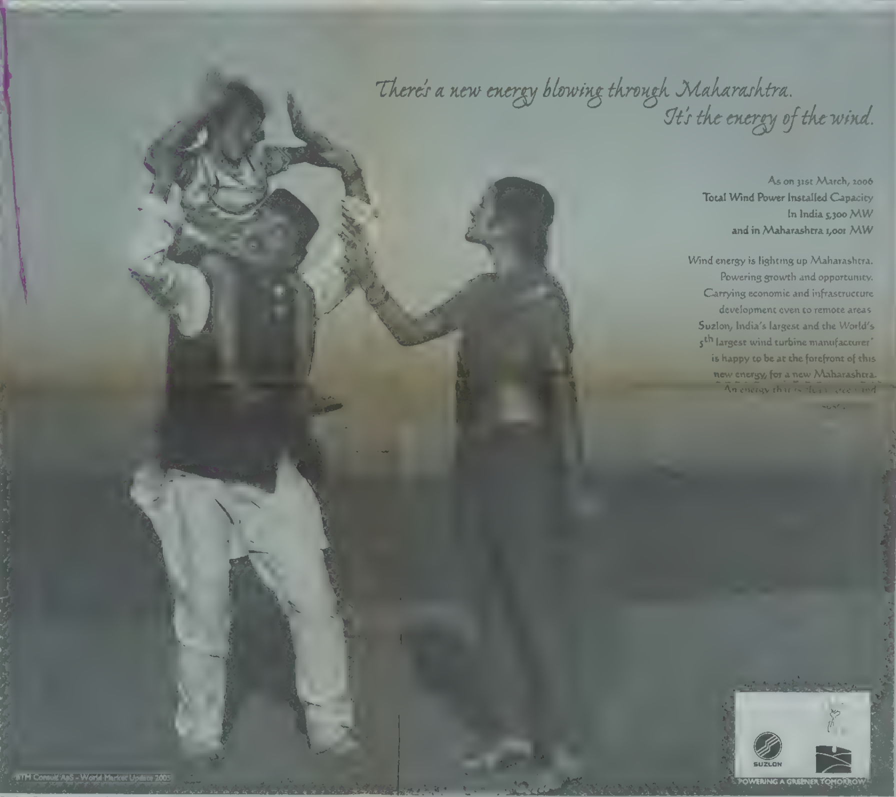
Afterward, the three Presidents were greeted by tens of thousands of cheering people gathered in the broad Plaza of the Revolution to celebrate the signing.

The agreement is "a clever mixture of politics and economics, weighted toward the politics," said Gary Hufbauer, an economist at the Institute for International Economics, a Washington think tank.

The deal signed between Chavez and Castro has Venezuela—the world's fifth largest oil exporter and a major supplier to the United States—selling 90,000 barrels a day of crude to the communist-run island at international market prices, but in exchange for agricultural products and other services instead of cash.

The addition of Bolivia will beef up the grouping's economic potential with the Andean nation's vast natural gas reserves.

Morales, a union leader who was swept to power on a leftist platform, has long railed against the US economic policies. AP



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Scheduled or non-scheduled air transport Service of any passenger embarking in India for international journey, in any class other than Economy class.

8. सरकारी रेल (भारतीय रेल) के सिवा किसी व्यक्ति द्वारा रेल कंटेनरों से माल ढोने की सेवा
Transport of goods in containers by rail provided by any person, other than Government Railway (Indian Railways).

9. व्यवसाय सहायता सेवाएं
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Internet Telephony Service.

14. क्रूज जलपोत परिवहन सेवा
Transport by Cruise Ship Service

15. क्रैडिट कार्ड, डेबिट कार्ड, चार्ज कार्ड एवं अन्य भुगतान कार्डों से सम्बंधित सेवाएं
Credit card, Debit card, Charge card or other payment cards related Services

For detailed definition and specifications of each of the above mentioned Services, please refer to the statutory provisions.
विस्तृत और अधिकृत विवरण और सूचना के लिए संबंधित अधिनियम और प्रावधान देखें.

Directorate of Publicity & Public Relations, [illegible] 110 002

Clooney takes on Osama in Darfur

Sarah Baxter

Washington: It was just six weeks ago that actor George Clooney turned to Nick, his journalist father, and said "Why don't we go over there, pop?" They had been reading reports about the "slow-motion genocide" taking place in Darfur in western Sudan and felt that it was not getting the attention it deserved

"I'm not a legislator, I'm not a politician," the Oscar-winning star said last week on his return with his father from a refugee camp near the troubled region. "I just try to use the credit card that you get for being famous in life in instances when I can "

By then Osama bin Laden had called on jihadis to open a new front against planned international peacekeeping forces in Darfur and preparations were under way for a rally in Washington The march organised by the Save Darfur campaign, a coalition of religious, trade union and human rights groups, has had more publicity than it dreamt possible

"We only had one guy operating out of an apartment last year, said a leading organiser who recalled that the last rally had attracted just 100 people. By this weekend, more than 700,000 had signed a petition calling for US President Bush to support sending a "stronger" multinational force to the region

The obstacle is not Bush, who on Friday urged Sudan's leaders to accept a plan for up to 20,000 UN troops to join 7,000 African Union peacekeepers already there "We don't like it when we see women raped and brutalised and we expect there to be a full effort by the government to protect life," Bush said in a message of support for the rally



ACTOR ACTIVIST: The star's visit might help in changing the situation in Sudan

Without the Sudanese government's permission, however, sending a UN force could be regarded as an invasion. Nato has promised to take a more "robust" role in Darfur, according to Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, and Bin Laden's warning has further raised the stakes.

But it is the Hollywood star's intervention which has captured the public's attention. "I think Clooney might edge out Bin Laden in the popularity stakes, at least in the US," one activist said "I'd rather be known as an Oscar winner than a mass murderer"

Darfur has not loomed large in America's or Europe's conscience, despite the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians and the displacement of more than 2 million people in recent years by marauding Arab militia

In Darfur the violence is Muslim-on-Muslim between the militia and tribes. There have been tensions in the Save Darfur campaign over some American Christian groups' zeal for conversions After complaints, Sudan Sunrise, a group in Kansas, last week removed references on its website to its "one-on-one lifestyle evangelism to Darfurian Muslims living in refugee camps in Chad"

Clooney and his father stayed in after troops stopped them crossing into Sudan. Clooney, 45, said that he had seen enough to convince him that either Nato or the UN must act.

"Women go out to get wood and get raped Men don't go because they would be killed. Older women are sent because they have less chance of being raped It is that crass," he said. SUNDAY TIMES

VIEW FROM LONDON

Happy last anniversary, Mr Prime Minister

Today is Tony Blair's ninth anniversary at 10, Downing Street. It is an anniversary embattled heads of government everywhere might care to note. Blair has survived the rigours of high office long enough to be just 365 days away from yet another, more significant anniversary —10 years at Downing Street, which would surpass Margaret Thatcher's record.

But, the prime minister is interesting for besieged leaders everywhere because he is at that stage in long-lived political careers, when the law of unexpected horrors afflicts deeply, madly. As of now, he is slap up in the middle of the longest 'nocens' week ever. Nocens is Latin for bad, but that doesn't explain why Blair's nocens week can last anything from seven to 20 days. The concept of the "worst week" has fatefully marked Blair's administration for at least three years. The Iraq invasion was surely the point it began. Blair has never ever really recovered; merely survived to live another day older, greyer but with trademark grin intact.

Blair needs no translation to underline the subtext of his particular brand of nocens week. His political problems go far beyond anything thrown up by events. They go much deeper. Blair, who lived and won his first of three elections by spin, now faces the hideous prospect that he and his government is literally dying of it.

Consequently, it doesn't matter that his home secretary and closest political ally, Charles Clarke, was only recently publicly forced to confess to unaccountably "losing" 1,023 foreign passport-holding ex-convicts when they left prison. Britain's regards these ex-convicts as doubly dangerous because they bear foreign passports. The PR toll is immense. But Blair's problems go deeper.

It is important but not significant that his health secretary and close ally, Patricia Hewitt, was recently jeered by Britain's nurses for declaring that the much-criticised, much-loved NHS had just had its "best year ever". Hewitt was making a valid point. But, Britain's nurses and citizens don't agree the service is good enough. But even this brouhaha is not the worst of his problems. They go deeper.

Far deeper than the recent ludicrous sight of Blair's deputy, a 67-year-old paunchy politician, cavorting with his civil-servant mistress. John Prescott's marital infidelities appeared to knock the final nail into the coffin of Blair's nine-year-old promise to lead a



Labour government that was "purer than purer whiter than white". Salacious headlines may be embarrassing but they are still the least of Blair's problems.

No, the elephant in the room is spin. Blair, who became prime minister in on the eve of his 44th birthday, led into Downing Street a government based on spin; a quick-shuffle publicity matrix; the politics of illusion; now-you-see-it-now-you-don't policy.

In nine years, he and his ministers have pursued focus-group policy-making; eye-catching initiatives; smart soundbites. Now, the gap between reality and rhetoric is too wide to mask it. Blair is in office but not truly in power. Spin rules, except that it is media spin, that of a pack baying for blood or a head. Happy Anniversary, Mr Blair. There may not be another

Doctor pushes for US health reforms

Chicago: An Indian-American physician, who is president-elect of the Chicago Medical Society, has said that doctors should take the lead and work with lawmakers in the US on healthcare reforms that should include a reduction in fines to be paid in cases of medical negligence

Shastri Swaminathan, a psychiatrist who has served as president of the Illinois Psychiatric Society, will take over as Chicago Medical Society president June 3

Foremost on his agenda, he said, would be to mobilise physicians to work towards a better health system that would include reducing medical malpractice premiums that have to be paid by doctors in cases of negligence

Medicare reimbursements are a concern. So, as a physician, you are hit with a triple whammy—the overheads are going up, malpractice insurance is going up, while the reimbursements are going down," he said

Swaminathan said physicians had been "left off the table" in the current struggle for healthcare reforms.

Swaminathan has been a psychiatrist for three decades and said there had been a change in the attitude of Indians towards mental illness "When I was doing my residency in 1974, I would see one patient a year. Today I see over 50 annually. The perceptions have changed Indians have begun to see mental illness as a bona fide physical illness."

Indian patients with mental illness were benefited because they had a very strong family network to fall back upon, he said. IANS

DIASPORA NEWS

Galbraith passes away at 97

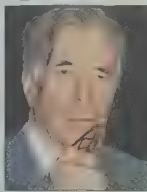
New York: Economist John Kenneth Galbraith, who focused on core issues like the distribution of wealth, died on Saturday at a hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the age of 97

Citing the late economist's son, Alan Galbraith, the New York Times said Galbraith was one of the most widely read authors in the history of economics Among his 33 books was *The Affluent Society*, one of the rare works that forces a nation to re-examine its values, the obituary said.

He wrote fluidly, even on complex topics, and many of his compelling phrases —among them "the affluent society", "conventional wisdom" and "countervailing power"—became part of the language, according to The Times

In his other works, he argued that modern industrial production is a large-scale process that required planning, and planning required stability, which meant that the market must be regulated

US President John F Kennedy asked Galbraith to serve as US ambassador to India, and he performed



the work from 1961 to 1963 While in India, he helped establish one of the first computer science departments at the Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur.

Galbraith was consulted frequently by national leaders, and he gave advice freely, though it may have been ignored as often as it was taken, the newspaper said. Galbraith, a lecturer for generations of Harvard University students, always commanded attention

The renowned economist was born in Iona Station, in the Canadian province of Ontario He began his economic studies at the Ontario Agricultural College in 1931, then moved to California where he continued work on his doctorate at the University of California at Berkeley He became a US citizen in 1937

After joining the administration of president Franklin D Roosevelt, Galbraith worked at the Office of Price Administration, where he was charged preventing inflation from crippling the war effort

After the war, he became an advisor to post-war regimes in Germany and Japan. In 1948, Galbraith was appointed professor of economics at Harvard University.

In the 1950s, he developed a theory of price control, in which he argued for an anti-inflation policy He also argued in his book *American Capitalism* that US post-war success arose not out of "getting the prices right", but rather of "getting the prices wrong" and allowing industrial concentration to develop. AFP

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Friendly gesture



RAISING ISSUES: *Chinese President Hu Jintao greets Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha L. K. Advani in New Delhi on Wednesday. Terrorism and the border issue figured during the meeting. The BJP leader asked Mr. Hu to use his country's good relations with Pakistan to tell the Pakistani leadership that the Kashmir question should not hold hostage the development of better relations with India in other areas. Mr. Advani also raised the issue of the Dalai Lama briefly.* – PHOTO: AP

Hu for stepped up boundary talks

Early settlement of row represents "shared wish"

Amit Baruah

- **Strong growth of business has become "new focal point" in bilateral relations**
- **He suggests increased cooperation on major international issues**

NEW DELHI: Chinese President Hu Jintao on Wednesday declared that the growth of Beijing-New Delhi relations made it possible to accelerate the process of settling the boundary issue

Setting priorities for enhancing their strategic and cooperative partnership, he called on the two sides to increase political trust, enhance business cooperation and enrich bilateral relations, increase cultural and social relations, step up consultations on the boundary issue, and develop multilateral cooperation

High-level exchanges

"We should be visionary and farsighted, follow the trend of history, and view our relations in a strategic perspective. We should continue regular leadership meetings and expand high-level exchanges between the governments, legislatures and political parties to enhance mutual understanding," he said at a function organised by the Indian Council for World Affairs at the Vigyan Bhavan here

The strong growth of business relations had become a "new focal point" in bilateral relations, with two-way trade registering an average annual growth rate of 32 per cent between 1995 and 2005

"Given the size and potential of our respective economies, there is enormous potential to be tapped. We should work vigorously to increase the varieties of goods traded, and add more value to them."

The Chinese President said tourist flows and student exchanges had increased rapidly. "We should strengthen cooperation in education and tourism, expand air links, increase media and youth exchanges, and forge closer ties between sister cities "

Mr. Hu said an early settlement of the boundary issue, left over from the past, represented the "shared wish" of the two peoples, and would serve the fundamental interests of the two countries "It will also contribute to peace and stability in the region."

"China is ready to work with India, guided by the five principles of peaceful co-existence and the overall interests of the two countries, to actively seek a fair, just and mutually acceptable solution [to the border question] through friendly consultation on an equal footing. We hope to turn [the] China-India boundary into a bond of good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation."

Suggesting increased coordination on major global issues, Mr Hu said China and India should also strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation, and work together to build a harmonious Asia

Turning to domestic issues, he saluted the remarkable economic progress made by China, but said the leadership was keenly aware of the country's uneven regional development and a per capita income that ranked "after the 100th place" in the world

"We have set the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in China in the first 20 years of the 21st century. We will, guided by a scientific outlook on development that puts people first .. endeavour to build a harmonious society."

"Our target is to quadruple China's GDP [gross domestic product] of 2000 by 2020 so that it will reach $4 trillion and $3,000 in per capita terms. By then, China will have made greater progress in economic development, democracy, science and technology, and education."

China's development would promote world peace "History has shown and will continue to show that China's development is peaceful, open and cooperative in nature, and that China will remain a staunch force for world peace and common development."

India welcomes Nepal accord

Diplomatic Correspondent

NEW DELHI: India has welcomed the signing of a "comprehensive national peace agreement" between the Nepal Government and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) on Tuesday and hoped it would end the politics and culture of violence in the Himalayan nation

The critical test of this agreement will be its implementation on the ground We call upon all sides and stakeholders in Nepal to strictly abide by their commitments under the agreement," an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in a statement

"Violations must be dealt with under the laws of the land, and full cooperation extended to those empowered to supervise the steps ahead such as the police, the Election Commission, and the U.N. [United Nations]. The people's mandate, and their trust, must not be betrayed," he stressed

The spokesman hoped that the agreement would herald the beginning of a lasting peace to let the Nepal people exercise their right to decide their destiny through free and fair elections, without intimidation

"India stands ready to continue to help in every way, to ensure that this historic opportunity is not lost," he said.

Left leaders call on Hu

K.V. Prasad

NEW DELHI: Chinese president Hu Jintao told the Left parties on Wednesday that his visit had a positive outcome and that India-China relations, transcending bilateral relations, had assumed a "global scope "

He said the relations between the Communist Party of China and the Left parties could be strengthened further with more exchanges and learning from each other's experiences

Mr. Hu's observations came at a meeting Left leaders had with him

Responding to his suggestion, the Left parties said teams could be sent to study different sectors in China (like agriculture) and learn from their experience

CPI (M) general secretary Prakash Karat, welcoming the outcome of the talks between the two sides, was confident that this would mark further strengthening of relations

The Left parties viewed the growing relations as cooperative and complementary and not based on rivalry and competition, a CPI (M) press release said

Besides Mr. Karat, the other leaders who called on Mr Hu included CPI (M) Polit Bureau member Sitaram Yechury, CPI general secretary A.B. Bardhan and party MP S. Sudhakar Reddy, All India Forward Bloc general secretary Debabrata Biswas and secretary G. Devarajan.

Mr. Yechury said Mr. Hu expressed satisfaction over the visit and hoped it would be carried forward when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh made a return visit in the first half of next year.

Fraternal relations

CPI general secretary Mr. Bardhan said the meeting was on the basis of the fraternal relations the Left parties had with the Communist Party of China.

Swaminathan meets Buddhadeb

Special Correspondent

KOLKATA: M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman of the National Commission on Agriculture, said here on Wednesday that land which was non-suitable for agriculture should be acquired for setting up industry. Greater industrialisation did not necessarily affect food security but prime agricultural land should be reserved for farming, he said.

Dr. Swaminathan, who met Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, said there should be a code of conduct on the use of land and marketing of agricultural produce. Dr Swaminathan discussed with Mr. Bhattacharjee ways to improve the income of small farmers.

Creation of job opportunities in the rural sector and providing work security should be the aim of any agricultural policy, he said.

The West Bengal Government is preparing a map, which will identify land use patterns and land on which industry could be set up.

24,000 more men for RPF

Force being modernised with weaponry, communication systems

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Railway Minister Lalu Prasad on Wednesday announced recruitment of 24,000 Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel to firm up the security of railways and passengers.

He was speaking at the RPF anniversary-cum-investiture ceremony here.

Mr. Prasad exhorted RPF men to do their best to check crimes such as dacoity and face new challenges.

While lauding the service rendered by the RPF personnel, he said the Jagjiwan Ram RPF Academy would be provided with more facilities.

The force was being modernised with modern weaponry, communication systems and more personnel.

Mr. Prasad announced a reward of Rs.15 lakh for RPF personnel for their excellent performance

Ministers of State for Railways Naranbhai J. Rathwa and R. Velu; Chairman of Railway Board J. P Batra; Director General of RPF A. K. Suri and other senior officials were present.

Fall in crime rate

Mr. Suri said alertness on the part of the RPF personnel had resulted in reduction in crimes.

In all 1,627 children were rescued during the year and handed over to their parents/non-governmental organisations

Coordination

The RPF was actively coordinating with the Government Railway Police and State Police in tackling crimes such as blasts on trains, especially in crowded places, protecting railway tracks and dealing with challenges from terrorists/extremists, he said

UPA confused on tackling terror: Vajpayee

Says resuming dialogue with Pakistan at this juncture is futile

Staff Reporter



VETERANS PROTEST: *BJP leaders Rajnath Singh, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi at a protest rally against the UPA Government at Parliament Street in New Delhi on Wednesday.* – PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

NEW DELHI: The former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on Wednesday accused the United Progressive Alliance Government of being confused over tackling terrorism that was threatening the country's unity and integrity

In an apparent reference to the Parliament attack case accused Mohammad Afzal, Mr. Vajpayee said those who had died fighting terrorists during the December 13, 2001 attack on Parliament continue to be neglected.

Mr. Vajpayee was addressing a rally to Parliament organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party to press for execution of the death penalty awarded to Mohammad Afzal and caution the Centre against entertaining any clemency petition

Mr. Vajpayee said terrorism had emerged the biggest threat to the country's unity and integrity, but the Government was confused on how to tackle it "What is the Government's policy on terror?" he asked.

Inconsistent stand

On resumption of dialogue with Pakistan, he said talks at this juncture were futile. "They [terrorists] are challenging us every day, but the UPA Government is finding ways to talk. We are not against talks, but what is the use? The Government is not sure about its own initiatives "

On Pakistan's involvement in terror activities in India, he said the UPA Government was inconsistent on the issue "One Ministry says one thing, another says something else," he said, adding that the Mumbai police had blamed Pakistan for the July train bombings "Still the Government says it will find a solution through talks. But how and in what way?" he asked

In an apparent reference to the coming Assembly polls in five States early next year, Mr Vajpayee said the issue of national security and the sense of insecurity among people could bring a change in governments "The situation has to be changed. The BJP urges the people to be ready for any sacrifice for national security The Government should change its policies. Or else the people would be forced to change the Government."

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha L.K. Advani, who led a contingent from Raj Ghat, said both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress president Sonia Gandhi should clear their position on the issue of the death for Afzal "They should clear their stand on Afzal's hanging It is a question of justice to the security personnel. . Clemency to Afzal will amount to disrespect to our security forces "

"Azad must go"

Mr. Advani [illegible] Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad for his alleged support to [illegible] amounted to betrayal of the nation "

[illegible] tence [illegible] The Government clearly [illegible] ferred votes to [illegible] integrity of the [illegible] alleged

Senior BJP leaders Venkaiah Naidu, Jaswant Singh, Murli Manohar [illegible] Sushma Swaraj [illegible] dressed the rally

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Tender Notice - Time Extension

Last date for submission of Tender No. 1/06-07 and 2/06-07 published on the dailies Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi, Desabhimani and The Hindu dated 19 10 2006 from The Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Panmana, Kerala Water Authority is hereby extended from 30 11 2006 to 23 12 2006

Last date for submission of Tender No. 3/06-07, 4/06-07 and 5/06-07 published on the dailies Mathrubhumi, and The Hindu dated 20 11 2006 from the Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Panmana, Kerala Water Authority is hereby extended from 22 12 2006 to 23 12 2006 due to some Technical reasons. Details of the Tenders are [illegible]

KERALA RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROJECT.

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Date 18 10 2006 — Bid No CWSS Package I, II, III, IV and V

1. The Government of India has received a credit from the International Development Association towards the cost of KERALA RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROJECT and intends to apply a part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the contracts for construction of works as detailed below Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the IBRD Guidelines for Procurement. Bidders from India should, however, be registered with the Government of Kerala or other State Governments/Government of India, or State / Central Government Undertakings. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract
2. The Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority on behalf of Kerala Water Authority invites bids for the construction of works detailed in the table The bidders may submit bids for any or all of the following works.
3. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased from the office of Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority from 25 10 2006 to 14 12 2006, for a non-refundable fee (Three sets) as indicated, in the form of cash or Demand Draft on any Scheduled bank payable at Karunagappally, Kollam District in favour of Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority, Vadakkumthala P O , Kollam District Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address Bidding documents requested by mail will be despatched by registered/speed post on payment of an extra amount of Rs 200/- The Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority, Vadakkumthala P O., will not be held responsible for the postal delay if any, in the delivery of the documents or non-receipt of the same
4. Bids must be accompanied by security of the amount specified for the work in the table below, drawn in favour of Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority, Vadakkumthala P.O, Kollam District. Bid security will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the bidding document and shall have to be valid for 45 days beyond the validity of the bid
5. Bid must be delivered to Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority, Vadakkumthala P O , Kollam District on or before the designated time and date as noted in the table below and will be opened on the same day at 15.30 hours, in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend If the office happens to be closed on the date of receipt of the bids as specified, the bids will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time and venue
6. A prebid meeting will be held on 18 12 2006 at the designated time as noted in the table below at the office of Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Kerala Water Authority, Vadakkumthala P O , Kollam District to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in Clause 9 2 of 'Instructions to Bidders' of the bidding document
7. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents

TENDER NO	TENDER NO	PAC	B.D SECURITY	COST OF TENDER [illegible]	PERIOD OF SALE FROM	PERIOD OF SALE TO	LAST DATE OF RECEIPT OF TENDER	DATE AND TIME OF PRE BID MEETING	DATE OF OPENING THE TENDER	TIME OF COMPLETION
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
01/06-07	Formation of Leading Channel, Treatment Plant 11.5 mld Clear Water Sump 10 Lakh Litres, Ohsr 10 Lakhs Litres at Sasthamcottah	12.2 Million	0.12 Million	Rs 2000 + 4% Vat Copy Rs 1000 + 4% Vat	25 10 2006	14 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 00 PM	18 12 2006 11 00 AM	23 12 2006 3 30 PM	10 Months
2/06-07	Supplying and Laying Raw Water Pumping Main 400mm C Class B 36m Clear Water Pumping Main 450mm C Class A [illegible] Transmission Main 90mm D K9 6000m	48.x Million	0.48 Million	Rs 2000 + 4% Vat Copy Rs 1000 + 4% Vat	25 10 2006	14 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 00 PM	18 12 2006 12 00 noon	23 12 2006 3 30 PM	10 Months
3/06-07	Supplying Laying And Testing of Common Transmission Mains [illegible] Mm Di K9 960m 450 Mm Di K9 1592M INDEPENDENT Transmission to Chavara Panchayath [illegible] Mm D K9 3677 m [illegible] Mm D K9 1400 M 200 Mm Di K9 30 M And 110 Mm Pvc 850 M & 110 Mm Pvc 110 M Independent Transmission Main to Panmana Panchayath [illegible] Mm Di K9 [illegible] M 250 Mm D K9 1525 M 110 Mm Pvc 1000 M [illegible] 110 MM PVC [illegible] M	17.7 Million	0.17 Million	Rs 2000 + 4% Vat Copy Rs 1000 + 4% Vat	25 10 2006	14 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 00 PM	18 12 2006 2 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 30 PM	10 Months
4/06-07	Construction of Over Head Tanks At Kolathupuzha 17 Lakh [illegible] And Chembothikara 14 Lakh [illegible] Construction of Compound Walls At Specified Sites	30 Million	0.3 Million	Rs 2000 + 4% Vat Copy Rs 1000 + Vat	25 10 2006	14 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 00 PM	18 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 30 PM	10 Months
5/06-07	Supply And Erection of Transformers, Pumps and Motors 1 2 Nos of 110 HpVt 2 [illegible] Nos of 80 Hp Centrifugal 3 250 Kva Transformer At Site	11 Million	0.11 Million	Rs 2000 + 4% Vat Copy Rs 1000 + 4% Vat	25 10 2006	14 12 2006 3 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 00 PM	18 12 2006 4 00 PM	23 12 2006 3 30 PM	10 Months

GL6-465/06-07

Sd/-
Project Director

Not so free market

Capitalism is fine for pricing potatoes, but not so good at setting the value of big companies.

Michael Kinsley

THE DEATH of Milton Friedman has been an occasion for celebrating the magic of capitalism, and fair enough. Capitalism is pretty great and Friedman was its feisty defender when that view was far from universally held. But let's not get carried away. There are things capitalism does not do well, and other things that masquerade as capitalism at work, and wrongly claim its virtues.

Capitalism is brilliant at setting the price of potatoes. But how good is it at setting the price of a large company? To all appearances, the stock market is capitalism operating under near-laboratory conditions. Yet the prices set are patently wrong. That is not my opinion. Well, yes, it is my opinion. But it is not only my opinion. It is held by America's financial leaders, though they don't put it quite that way. Actually, it is close to a provable fact. The free market cannot be setting the right price for financial assets like shares of stock, because often there are different prices with equal claims to be the product of free-market capitalism. They can't all be right.

In America, most people now have money invested in the stock market, either directly or through company, union or government-employee pensions. President George W Bush famously wanted to put money from social security, America's public retirement system, into the stock market as well. Publicly traded stocks are a good thing, goes the conventional explanation, because they allow people to share in the growth of the economy. They are good for society because, by creating a market and setting a value for corporate shares, they make it possible for corporations to raise money by issuing shares in the first place.

All of this depends, though, on the assumption that the stock market sets the right price for shares of big companies. But a whole separate part of corporate finance is based on the assumption that the prices are wrong. These special deals used to be called leveraged buyouts. Now the term is "private equity." The details are different, but the principle is the same. Private investors buy a company from its public stockholders. They have a letter from an investment bank saying the price is fair. They usually have the support of management or actually are the management.

The public stockholders have little choice. But time and again — surprise, surprise — the bank turns out to be wrong.

The company is actually far more valuable. Soon the company is sold at a large profit, to another company or back to the public.

So free-market capitalism has decreed three different values for this company. One is set by the stock market; one is what the private investors are offering — usually a bit more than the market capitalisation. And one is what the private investors sell the company for a blink of an eye later — usually a lot more than the other two. Which is the true capitalist price? Which one represents the most sublime interaction of supply and demand? Anyone? Anyone?

Defenders of this procedure say it's not that the stockholders have been swindled. It's that the company is actually far more valuable in private hands because managers — even the same managers — can manage far better without the constraints of public ownership. Maybe. But if these deals aren't a swindle, then the stock market is a swindle. It does not maximise value for its working-class and middle-class investors. It leaves money on the table waiting for "private equity" to swoop and pick it up. Furthermore, Friedman was wrong and the other famous economist who died this year, John Kenneth Galbraith, was right: the free market in corporate shares doesn't produce well-run companies.

Either the stock market is a fraud on the public, or these deals that dominate the business pages are a fraud on the public. Which is it? — **©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006**

Till the cows come home

The decision to give quality cows to poor farmers in Vidharbha has only harmed the beneficiaries.

P Sainath

"THIS IS my demand," says Ravindra Gowarkar bitterly. "I want every beneficiary of the Sixth Pay Commission to get a cow like the one the government gave me." No pay hike the next time. "Give them an acre of land each if you like. And let the babus try and earn from this system," says the angry, educated farmer in Vanjiri. "This animal is destroying us."

"They landed up at my house and made me take this cow," protests Kamlabai Gudhe in Lonsawala, Wardha. This Dalit farmer's husband committed suicide five months ago. "I said we don't want this. We have never kept cattle and don't know how to. Give one of us a job, any work. Instead, my son is full time in service of this cow. Were he not tied down by it, he would earn Rs.50 a day as a labourer. This brute eats more than all us in this house put together. And we don't get more than four litres of milk in a day from it."

"The buffalo I got through the government cost me Rs.120-Rs.150 a day," says Mr. Gowarkar's neighbour. "It never stopped eating." He and several others have sold their animals. Next door, Anjanabai Dolaskar still has hers. "I feed it the wheat meant for my son — who was the 'beneficiary.'" As for suicide-hit households, says a top official in Amravati, "none of them even applied to government for an animal."

Giving quality cows to thousands of poor farmers was a high-profile element in the relief 'packages' of both Maharashtra Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The first would bring 40,000 new cows to the district in three years. The second, 18,000 in the same period. Even at the time, the idea was attacked as "insane" by critics from Planning Commission members to farm activists and others (*The Hindu*, July 14, 2006). Now the Chief Minister's package has crashed. The Prime Minister's hasn't even taken off.



Kamlabai Gudhe with her Rs 17,500 cow in Lonsawala. "It eats more than all of us together," she says. – PHOTO: P. SAINATH

Predictable chaos

The chaos, points out Vijay Jawandia, one of the region's foremost thinkers and activists, was predictable. "It was not clever to give poor farmers costly cows in places where there is no water or fodder." Which describes much of Vidharbha. And the result is familiar. Farmers without food, cows without fodder. No less predictable: the State's fodder assistance scheme is a mess. Much of what the farmers have got is inadequate, inedible, and the animals won't have it.

At first, the 'beneficiary' was to go to the market with an official of the Animal Husbandry Department and choose his or her cow. In practice, the AHD soon began 'choosing' on its own. The type of animal also changed. The original plan was to buy sturdy local breeds. Or a buffalo. Soon, as in much of the country, the idea of 'Jersey' cows slipped in. With each change, the costs of the game rose. Ms Gudhe's cow is worth Rs.17,500. In theory, at least. She calls the sorry creature an "aadha Jersey."

Mr. Jawandia, amongst others, had demanded that the crores of rupees directed at these schemes be used to promote the growth of jowar instead. Vidharbha's livestock disaster began with the decline of food crop in the region. Jowar is where the fodder comes from. Up to 30 per cent of the land in some districts here was once under jowar.

Today, that's less than five per cent. Less fodder implies fewer cows, less milk. Importantly, it means less manure too, which affects soil fertility.

So milk production in the region collapsed some years ago. Yavatmal district is a good example, says Dada Rhode. He has been a milk collection contractor for decades. "Just 12 years ago," he says, "around 35,000 litres a day was procured in this district. Today, that's around 7,000 litres daily." An 80 per cent fall. In contrast, western Maharashtra could produce three quarters of a million litres in a day. Just two districts there, Kolhapur and Sangli, produce more milk than all of Vidharbha and Marathwada together.

Over there, points out Mr. Jawandia, "there is irrigation and water. The top of the sugarcane, a local by-product, is good green fodder. And the climatic conditions are better for dairying. For four months of the year, Vidharbha gets far hotter. The other regions have Pune and Mumbai as major markets. That doesn't exist here."

"Now," says Mr. Rhode, "milk comes in here from all over. From other districts and other States. Even all the way from Kakinada in coastal Andhra Pradesh. Private companies have gained from the collapse. And you'll find packaged milk all over the place."

"If jowar comes back," say farmers here, "farmers will begin to keep cattle once again." Just now, farmers are trying to give them away. Several have sold the animals. And lost money doing it. For these cattle, though subsidised (between 50 per cent and 75 per cent), did not come free. Ms. Gudhe in Wardha, for instance, paid more than the Rs.5,000 required of her for the cow. The AHD man extracted the standard Rs.500 bribe from her, tagging it on to the price. This happened to most others who got a cow. If all these schemes were fully implemented, the region's struggling farmers would part with over Rs 25 crore for the animals. Not counting what they would spend on maintaining them.

The cows given out may be "half" jerseys, but their appetites are not. The animal needs five kg of oil cake daily, which costs about Rs.45. Then there's the green fodder it needs. There is also the cost of labour in looking after a Rs.17,500 cow. "I'm tied to this thing," complains Bhaskar Gudhe, son of Ms. Kamlabai Gudhe in Lonsawala. "Don't forget I lose Rs.50 at least from not working elsewhere." There is also, as Ashok Manchalwar in Vanjiri says, "the bus ticket when I go to sell the milk. That's nearly Rs.30 for each trip. All in all, the costs of keeping the animal range from between Rs.85 and Rs.150 a day depending on who you are and where you live. Mr. Bhaskar Gudhe gets four litres and Mr. Manchalwar eight in a day. With a litre selling at Rs.9, they make between Rs 36 and Rs 70 at the most. "Remember it eats in the non-milking season as well," says a disgruntled Mr. Bhaskar Gudhe.

"I think I'll go and leave this creature at the Collector's house," says Mr. Bhaskar Gudhe. "Let him raise it." If other angry 'beneficiaries' here act the same way, the Collector could end up with the biggest herd in the region. And he won't have to wait till the cows come home.

A rare victory

By taking drastic action, the Achuar people of the Amazon have forced an oil company to finally start cutting back on pollution.

Dan Collyns

IT WAS by any measure a remarkable protest. More than 800 Achuar tribespeople from the borders of Peru and Ecuador, led by their traditional chiefs with their red and yellow-feathered headdresses, arrived last month by the boatload in the twilight hours at four oil wells in the middle of the Amazonian rainforest.

Their faces streaked with paint and with people carrying hunting shotguns and ceremonial spears, they formed a peaceful blockade of Peru's largest oil facility. They stayed for nearly two weeks, shutting down power to most of the region's oil production, and its road, airport, and river access.

It was a desperate attempt by the Achuar to get the Peruvian Government to take notice of their plight. For decades they had been saying that their land had been heavily polluted and their waters poisoned by oil exploration, but they had been consistently ignored. The ploy worked. The loss of millions of dollars in revenue and around 40,000 barrels of oil a day forced the Government and Pluspetrol — Peru's largest oil and gas operator — to concede most of the Achuar's demands, including re-injecting all the contaminated waste water back into the ground within two years, and building a new hospital with enough money to run a health service for 10 years.

The victory was particularly sweet for the Achuar — who number around 8,000 in Peru's vast Amazon region of Loreto — because it was the only time in 36 years of oil exploration and extraction in their area that the state had intervened.

Companies have long been given a carte blanche to flout international environmental laws.

As part of a complex relationship, the oil company now provides medical care for some 1,800 Achuar due to the lack of state facilities.

Knock-out punch

Bill Powers, an American engineering consultant, says the Peruvian Government needs to be more cautious about how it issues oil concessions in the Amazon. "If they refuse to demand best practices then they'll be setting up more conflict in the Amazon," he predicts.

"They'll also be setting up the knock-out environmental punch for the Amazon. It will become a degraded environment with degraded terrain, and the indigenous people will become just a bunch of dirt-poor people. For years the government has been marketing Peru as one of the best places on the planet to invest in, but there's not been a word about protecting the environment or its native people." — **©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006**

Awaiting the charge of the youth brigade

The large number of first-time MPs in the 14th Lok Sabha had raised hopes.

K.V. Prasad

THE PRESENCE of a large number of young men and women was seen as one of the bright spots when the 14th Lok Sabha was elected. Now, more than two years later, the question is: where have they all gone?

The first-time MPs numbered 231, some of them well-educated urbanites. Though many of them came in with little or no experience in public life, they were otherwise visible faces in their respective fields.

The Congress had Milind Deora, Jitin Prasada, Rahul Gandhi, Sandeep Dikshit, Sachin Pilot, Deependra Hooda, Madhu Yaskhi Goud, L. Rajagopal, Tejaswani Sreeramesh, D. Purandareswari, Kuldeep Bishnoi, Govinda, and Naveen Jindal among others. The Bharatiya Janata Party's share was leaner with Manvendra Singh, Dushyant Singh, and Navjot Singh Sidhu among the more prominent. The hope was that these bright young faces would help re-define the way Parliament functioned. At the half-way mark, the report card is less than exciting.

As the people's representative, each MP has the right to raise issues of public importance and articulate his or her views through interventions in debates and discussions. One of the most forceful platforms available is question hour, when the members extract information from the Government on policy issues. For those in the Opposition, it is an opportunity to try and corner the treasury benches. An MP can combine home work, policy literature, and democratic sensitivity to put the Minister on the mat. And then there is the art of asking supplementary questions, which can reveal an MP's grasp of a particular issue.

For the last eight sessions, there have been just a few from among the young brigade who have sought to raise supplementary questions. In the Congress, Ms. Purandareswari and Ms Tejaswani Sreeramesh have been among the most noticeable. While Ms. Purandareswari's active participation led to her induction in the Union Council of Ministers, Ms. Tejaswani continues to show a healthy appetite for debates and interventions. Then there have been periodic interventions from Mr Rajagopal or Mr Goud, who gave up a law practice in the U.S. to be here.

Mr Rahul Gandhi has been conspicuously lagging on this count. He has regularly attended question hour and can often be seen in conversation with MPs seated next to him. But he has preferred not to make many interventions. The Lok Sabha website shows Mr Gandhi has spoken just twice in Parliament. One was a special mention drawing attention to the woes of sugarcane growers in Uttar Pradesh and the other a brief participation in the discussion on Demands for Grants for the Human Resource Development Ministry during March this year. Records show that of the questions he may have submitted, only two were admitted in 2005. One was on the state of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi in Fursatganj, Uttar Pradesh, and the other on the quality of education in technical institutes.

Mr. Gandhi served as a member on the Standing Committee on Home Affairs for two years before switching, this October, to the Human Resource Development Committee.

It has been a practice of parties to groom young leadership in Committees. But since their proceedings are closed-door affairs, there is little information available in the public domain on the contribution of any member.

Mr. Milind Deora took part in the discussions on the Prime Minister's visit to the United States last year and the supplementary demands for grants, and spoke on the Right to Information Bill and on the Petroleum and Natural Gas Board.

Mr. Deependra Hooda, who was elected from Rohtak after his father Bhupinder Singh Hooda became Haryana Chief Minister, participated in discussions on problems being faced by farmers and on the Union Budget. Mr. Sachin Pilot opened his account in December 2004 by taking part in a short duration discussion on farmers' issues. He too has participated in discussions on demands for grants on agriculture, the Railways, and also on the general budget.

On the BJP benches, Mr. Dushyant Singh, son of Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, began his innings in a discussion on power shortages in August 2004. later, he took part in discussions on the Railways and on farmers problems, besides the debate on The Food Safety and Standards Bill, 2005. Mr. Manvendra Singh, son of the former External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, another regular in the House, took part in the Finance Bill discussion in May 2005 and the Office of Profit Bill last July. Mr. Navjot Singh Sidhu in Parliament has yet to match his performance either on the cricket field or in matters relating to cricket off the field.

It is the prerogative of a party to decide which member will take part in a debate or speak on a Bill. But have these MPs been keen to demonstrate what they think about the problems facing the nation? It is not clear if they or their parties are mindful of the disappointing report card.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

>>A sentence in "Two persons killed as MTC bus goes out of control" (Chennai city, November 22, 2006, page 1) was, "The bus then rammed into a row of fish carts parked on the roadside, killing a *coolie*, ... A reader objects to the use of the word "coolie". Coolie can mean a hired labourer and also has a derogatory/offensive connotation that implies a person of Indian descent. Nowadays, it is often considered to be a racial slur. "Worker" or "labourer" would have been a better choice of word.

>>"Size 17-feet" became "size (17-feet)" in editing Rohit Brijnath's column "[Ian] Thorpe decides to plunge into ... life" ("Sport", November 22, 2006). A sentence in the report that confused a few readers was: "Always Thorpe has been unusual, and not just because of his *size (17-feet)*."

>>A reader points out that the name of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development is *D. Purandareswari*, and not D. Purandeswari. The error was in the text and photo caption of the report "Minister contests Global Monitoring report's claim" (November 22, 2006). (We had pointed out the same error in "Corrections and Clarifications", September 19, 2006.)

It is the policy of *The Hindu* to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page.

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U.S. woos Russia with WTO pact

The agreement clears the way for Russian membership in the global trade regime.

Vladimir Radyuhin

THE REMARKABLE turnaround in Washington's position in favour of supporting Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation last week may be a sign of significant shifts in U.S. foreign policy in the wake of the Republican defeat in the elections to Congress earlier this month.

After months of stalling on Moscow's 13-year-old bid to join the WTO, the U.S. suddenly changed its mind. The Trade Ministers of the two countries signed a bilateral agreement on Sunday on the sidelines of a two-day annual summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Hanoi. The agreement clears the way for Russian membership in the global trade pact as the U.S. was the only country in the 58-member WTO Working Party with which Moscow was yet to sign a bilateral protocol.

Barely two weeks earlier, Russian officials said Moscow might walk out of the WTO talks with the U.S. because of Washington's unacceptable demands.

The change of heart in the White House towards Russia was further underlined by the lifting of U.S. sanctions against Russian aircraft manufacturer Sukhoi, announced also in Hanoi. At first glance, these overtures came at a wrong time, after the Democrats swept control of both houses in the U.S. Congress, vowing to take a tougher stand on Russia than the Republicans have done so far.

However, Mr Bush's support for Russia's entry to the WTO comes out in a different light if placed in the context of an Iraq policy review his administration has undertaken jointly with Congress.

Appearing before the Senate Armed Services committee last week, the State Department coordinator for Iraq David Satterfield said the U.S. was prepared in principle to discuss Iranian activities in Iraq.

Similar suggestions have come from a 10-member Iraq Study Group, a congressionally mandated commission that has been studying the situation in Iraq since March. The two co-chairs of the commission, the former Republican Secretary of State, James Baker, and the former Democratic Representative, Lee Hamilton, expressed willingness to interact with Syria and Iran to stabilise the situation in Iraq.

If the U.S. were indeed to seek the cooperation of Iran and Syria, Russia could play a key role given its close ties with both Tehran and Damascus. This explains President Bush's sudden volte face on Russia's WTO membership.

President Bush took the rare step of [illegible] President Putin in the space of [illegible] week to discuss Iran. Before the two leaders [illegible] the APEC summit, they had [illegible] together at a Moscow airport where Mr Bush stopped for refuelling.

The Moscow meeting took place a day after President Putin received in the Kremlin Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani. Both Russian and American diplomats said Iran dominated their leaders' talks in Moscow.

With the U.S.' disastrous performance in Iraq, Iran, and North Korea primarily responsible for the Republicans' Congress debacle, it makes good sense for Mr Bush [illegible]

[illegible]

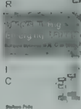
BOOK REVIEW

Announcement Authors and publishers are welcome to send copies of their books to *The Hindu* for review. While every effort will be made to acknowledge receipt of the books under "New Arrivals", the decision to review a book rests entirely with the newspaper. Receipt of individual books will not be acknowledged in response to enquiries

NEW ARRIVALS



Human Rights Year Book 2006: Pravin H. Parekh – Editor; Universal Law Publishing Co. Ltd., C-FF-1A, Dilkhush Industrial Estate (Opp. Hans Cinema, Azadpur) G. T. Karnal Road, Delhi-110033. Rs. 195.



Understanding Emerging Markets – Building Business BRIC by Brick: Stefano Pelle; Response Books, a division of Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., B-42, Panchsheel Enclave, New Delhi-10017. Rs. 295.



Land and Forest Rights of the Tribals Today: R. M. Sarkar; Serials Publications, 4830/24, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002. Rs. 850.

- **The Right Words** – Selected Essays 1967-2004. Sharma Futehally. Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110017 **Rs. 275.**
- **Gandhi's Views of Legal Justice!** Ajit Atri, **Rs. 650.**
- **Dowy Death** – Legal Provisions and Judicial Interpretation: Vinay Sharma, **Rs. 440.**
- **Disaster Management** – Text and Case Studies: D.B.N. Murthy, **Rs. 450.**
- **Science and God!** – Invisible Strings. Balbir Sandhu; **Rs. 300.** The above books pub. by Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd., F-159, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027
- **The Cave of Freedom** – A Novel: V Radhakrishnan; Konark Publishers Pvt Ltd., A-149, Main Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092. **Rs. 350.**
- **Tourist & Trekking Guide To Ladakh and Zanskar including Karakoram and Srinagar Valley:** Manmohan Singh Bawa; Indus Publishing Co., FS-5, Tagore Garden New Delhi 110027 **Rs. 350.**
- **Acts Indica – The Acts of St. Thomas in India:** P.V Mathew, K.V Mammen, Kottackal Publishers, P.B. 10, Maganam, Kottayam-686018. **Rs. 200.**
- **Higher Education in North-East India:** Vanlalchhawna; Mittal Publications, 4594/9, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002. Rs **450.**
- **Armed Conflicts and Peace Processes in South Asia 2006:** D Suba Chandran – Editor; Samskriti, C-9020, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070 **Rs. 695.**
- **Nationalism:** Naunihal Singh, Mittal Publications, 4594/9 Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002 **Rs. 495**
- **The Iraq War and Legal Issues** – The Trial of Saddam Hussein: B N Mehrish, Academic Excellence, 42 Ekta Apartments, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031. **Rs. 695.**
- **Banda Bahadur** – Betrayed by His Lieutenants: M. S. Chandla, Aurva Publication, 1430, Sector 42, Chandigarh. **Rs. 250.**
- **The Seven Commandments of the Bhagavad Gita:** J P Vaswani; Sterling Publishers (P) Ltd., A-59, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase II, New Delhi-110020 **Rs. 250.**
- **Can Is the Word of Power:** Barendra Kumar; Unicorn Books, J-3/16, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002 **Rs. 150.**
- **Organising Empire** – Individualism, Collective Agency and India: Purnima Bose, Zubaan, an associate of Kali for Women, K-92, 1st Floor, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi-110016 **Rs. 495.**
- **Vietnam** – The Definite Oral History Told From All Sides: Christian G. Appy; Ebury Press, Random House Group, U.K. **£ 20.**
- **Agriculture, Food Security, Nutrition and Health in North-East India:** Debashis Basu, B Francis Kulirani – Editors; Mittal Publications, 4594/9 Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002 **Rs. 895.**
- **In the Shadows – Unknown Craftsmen of Bengal; Payal Mohanka:** Niyogi Offset Pvt Ltd., D-78, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase 1, New Delhi-110020 **Rs. 495.**
- **The Evolution of The State Bank of India: Vol I – The Roots 1806-1876:** Amiya Kumar Bagchi; Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd., 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110017. **Rs. 1295.**
- **Essential Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita:** Jack Hawley; East-West Books (Madras) Pvt. Ltd., 571, Poonamallee High Road, Aminjikarai, Chennai-600029. **Rs. 150.**
- **Kriya Yoga: Paramahamsa Hariharananda;** Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt Ltd., 41 UA Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110007 **Rs. 295.**
- **The Word is Sacred – Sacred is the Word** – The Indian Manuscript Tradition: BN.Goswamy; Niyogi Offset Pvt Ltd., D-78, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I, New Delhi-110020.
- **Initiation to the Vedas** – An Abridged Edition of The Vedic Experience – **Mantramanjari:** Milena Carrara Pavan – Editor; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 41 UA Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110007 **Rs. 125.**
- **ZeNLP – The Power to Relax** – Triba Meditation for Stress Management: Murli Menon; New Dawn Press (an imprint of Sterling Publishers (P) Ltd, A-59, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase II, New Delhi-110020 **Rs. 125.**
- **High Blood Pressure Causes, Prevention and Treatment:** Krishan Gupta, Orient Paperbacks, (A division of Vision Books Pvt. Ltd), 5A/8 Ansari Road, New Delhi-110002 **Rs. 95.**

TAMIL

- **Justinum Aandaveliyum:** Nellai S. Muthu, Valentina Publications, 21, Loganathan Nagar, Second Street, Choolaimedu, Chennai-600094. **Rs. 90.**
- **Naan:** Kove Manisekaran, Venkata Pathippagam, 12, 4th Street, Venkateswara Nagar, Maduravoyal, Chennai-600095. **Rs. 90.**
- **Siddthargalin Varma Suthirangal:** R.C. Mohan; Thamarai Library, 7, NGO Colony, Third Street, Vadapalani, Chennai-600026 **Rs. 100.**
- **Nakkeerar Arulia Thirumurugatruppadai – Viruthiooral:** Kokkalaijerajan; copies can be had from author, No. W146, Anna Nagar West Extn., Chennai-600101 **Rs. 60.**
- **Shivalaya Dharisana Mural:** T. Thirunavukkarasu; Vanathi Pathippagam, 23, Deenadayalu Street, T. Nagar, Chennai-600017 **Rs. 50.**
- **Manthrartha Manjeri:** K. Sripada Rao – Tr. in Tamil; Mulbagal Sri Sri Sripadaraja Swamigal Mutt, (Chennai Branch), 6, 10th Street, Tansi Nagar, Velacherry, Chennai-600042 **Rs. 60.**
- **Annaiyin Arul Vakkukal 1000 (Parts 1 – 1 to 500):** N V. Balu; Sri Aurobindo Society, Anna Nagar Centre, Om Sri Annai Thyana Centre, AP-514, J Block, 8th Street, 16th Main Road, Anna Nagar, Chennai-600040. **Rs. 50.**

KANNADA

- **Yakshagana Granthasuchi:** Padekallu Vishnu Bhatta; Yakshagana Kendra, MGM College, Shivaprabha, Vadirajavanam, Hayagrivanagara, Udupi-576102. **Rs. 210.**
- **Shikshana Sanchaya** – Jeevana Dharshana: K. R. Hande; Vidyashri Publications, 4-2-33, Narikere Road, P.O. Ambalpaddy, Udupi-576103. **Rs. 150.**
- **Kelavu Adhyathmika Hagu Lowkika Lekhanagalu, Part II:** B. Subrahmanya Sastry; Ultra Publications, C/o. No. 81, 11th Main, Binny Layout, 2nd Stage, Vijayanagar, Bangalore-560040. **Rs. 50.**

MALAYALAM

- **Trip – Memoirs:** Sachu Thomas, **Rs. 75.**
- **Kathayile Chodyangal:** Faisal Aboobacker, **Rs. 40.**
- **Islamile Chinthaprasthanangal:** Vakkom Abdul Khader, **Rs. 65.**
- **The Art of Nemom Pushparaj Suushmasathyathinte Mugdhadarsanam:** P. Gopa Kumar; **Rs. 150.** The above books pub.by Olive Publications Pvt. Ltd, Koyappathodi Plaza, East Nadakkavu, Kozhikode-673011
- **Ellam Onnu Thurannu Parayan:** G.N Panikkar copies can be had from author, Pradeepthi, Pangode, Thirumala PO, Thiruvananthapuram-695006. **Rs. 145.**

HINDI

- **Hara Bhara Akaal:** Keshubhai Desai, **Rs. 170.**
- **Shuddhi Patra:** Neelakshi Singh; **Rs. 145.**
- **In Bin...** Padma Sachdeva; **Rs. 85.**
- **Sanatan Babu Ka Dampatya:** Kunal Singh; **Rs. 120.**
- **Akaal Sandhya:** Ramdhari Singh Diwakar, **Rs. 225.**
- **Ramayana – Mahabharat** – Kaal, Itihaas, Siddhant Basudeo Poddar; **Rs. 225.** The above books pub. by Bharatiya Jnanpith, 18, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110003
- **Swapna Ghar: Aruna Prakash;** Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110017. **Rs. 175.**

Vibrant mural legacy

A panoramic survey of Indian wall paintings as a cohesive tradition tracing the interconnections

Ranjit Hoskote

It makes little sense to speak of the past in the singular, when discussing Indian history; for what we inherit is really an aggregation of pasts, made up of rival claims and contending memories, plural lineages and multiple interpretations of events. Unfortunately, whether for reasons of concision or ideological bent, many studies of Indian history tend to adopt a point of vantage (whether the Gupta period or the colonial encounter, the Mughal epoch or the Maratha ascendancy), from which all other periods or phenomena seem like aberrations or side issues, or merely subsidiary teleological contributions to the writer's chosen moment. Not to mention the spectre of 'Indianness', by which insiders and outsiders, natives and foreigners are sought to be distinguished on a scale of belonging—as though this were either possible or desirable, in a historical context that has been celebrated for its joyous hybridity, constant processes of learning, and open borders.

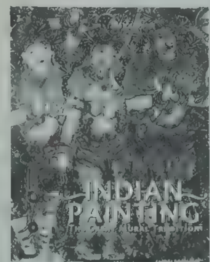
Diversity

Mira Seth's *Indian Painting: The Great Mural Tradition* marks a refreshing change. Here is a vast compendium of the subcontinent's wall painting styles, which acknowledges the diversity of sources as well as the tactical inventiveness that inform the accomplishments of Ajanta and Alchi, Padmanabhapuram and Kotah, Leepakshi and Agra. The author does not merely generate a mailing list of the great and glorious; rather, she gathers her protagonists—anonymous Buddhist monk and favoured atelier painter, royal patron and contemplative abbot, connoisseur and artisan—into larger contexts of political transformation, inter-cultural communication, iconographic development and the availability of materials.

Evolution

Crucially, Seth situates the evolution of Indian art, and especially its wall painting tradition, within a circuit of migrations, cross-pollinations and dialogues extending from Greece and Persia to South-east Asia, from the Tibetan highlands to the Indian Ocean. We are left in no doubt about India's vibrant presence, for two millennia, as a switch-point among civilisations— contributing to other cultures, and also borrowing from them; innovating in distinctive ways, yet also adapting from elsewhere. India was never, as some fanatics of the Indo-centric position would have us believe, an isolated point of diffusion from which all marvels issued forth into the world

The questions that we find answered, or at any rate addressed, in this vibrant atlas of India's mural legacy are: How did motifs travel across Asia's trade routes, such as the nimbus and the celestial flying figure? How did techniques pass from one circle of practitioners to another, as we see from the evidence of foreshortening, shading and the gravid illusion of volume? How can we track the innumerable and invisible pilgrimages through which diverse ideas of story-telling and image-making migrated across the rivers and mountains of India? Kushanas, Hunas, Greeks and Scythians leave their mark on these pages, through inscription and silence, we re-trace the life-world of the Mauryas, Satvahanas, Vakatakas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Guptas, with their intricate weave of religious impulse and dynastic ambition. A similar logic of sacred and secular interface sustains the monumental achievements of the Cholas, Pandyas, Pallavas and Cheras. And indeed, the interplay between the Divine as sovereign and the sovereign as divinity may be lavishly mapped across the art of the Vijayanagara and the Nayak period. At a later date, the pleasures of technological advance— new ways of viewing the intimate and staging the epic, arriving at the visual image via theatre and photography—may be discerned in the murals of Shekhawati and Jammu.



INDIAN PAINTING – The Great Mural Tradition: Mira Seth; Harry N. Abrams Inc., New York. Mapin Publishing, 31, Somnath Road, Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-380013. Rs. 3500.

Wall painting tradition

Seth proceeds by reflecting, in turn, on the key centres of the subcontinent's wall painting tradition: Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh and Badami in south-central and south India, as well as the domains of Tamil and Kerala painting; Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan in north-central and western India, and Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and the lineage of Pahari painting in north India and the Himalayan region. Each section brings us a trove of insight into the bodies of expertise and the conversations around practice through which the art of that centre evolved: we are invited into the transactions of ateliers, the intrigues of courts, the fluctuation between the material and the sublime, which informs the life of a monastery. By turn, we transit among the Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina and the Sikh traditions— these religions having sustained an unparalleled variety of mural practices in their shrines and temples, through the centuries. We note, also, the occasional overlap of technique and the synthesis of theme among these traditions. We are drawn, also, into the relationship between the wall painting and social behaviour: the ongoing negotiation between mural images and the ritual, familial and architectural atmospheres that surrounded them. We wander, in these pages, through the exquisite and memorable contributions to secular art made by one Muslim dynasty after another, from the Ghuris and the Aibaks, through the Tughlaks and the Mughals, to the Deccan Sultanates Indeed, we can re-affirm the realisation that sacred and secular are not opposite poles in Indian culture, so much as they are two aspects of a continuum; in the art of the Indic religious traditions, too, we find gods and humans, animals and celestial musicians consorting within the same lifeworld, linked together by bonds of interdependence.

The beautiful illustrations— which are, after all, direct tokens of the subject of the book— grant us a powerful and immediate apperception of detail, which supports the author's informed judgements and nuanced speculations on the historical record. *Indian Painting* confronts us with Bodhisattvas in their radiance, Mahavishnu and Shiva as cosmic principles, hunters and pilgrims going about their work, courtesans and courtiers defying the routines of everyday life with explorations of sensuous enrichment. These haunting images offer us the privilege of dwelling on the brush-strokes of long-vanished masters; of looking at the world afresh, through eyes that were seized by visions from beyond the edge of the palpable.

TAMIL

Carnatic musician

H. Ramakrishnan

ISAIULAGA ILAVARASAR GNB: Lalitha Ram; Vikatan Publications, 757, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 Rs 65

SOME BOOKS compel you to finish reading at one go. This is one such. Lalitha Ram, though born 15 years after G.N Balasubramaniam's (GNB) death has spent nearly 10 years to collect recordings and details of the music career of the 'prince charming' of Carnatic music

There is high drama in the book, like how the Thanjavur Anjaneyar Temple Festival Committee members were divided in inviting the 25-year-old GNB to perform at the festival There is also music in the book.

The author has not only given graphic and vivid details that are fascinating, and at times spellbinding of the genius that was GNB but also has narrated several mesmerising incidents of that eventful period.

The book also provides details of GNB's celluloid jaunt, his love for wristwatches, pens and cars, his habit of shifting his residence at regular intervals, his opinion of other musicians, his parting of ways with Palghat Mani Iyer and their strained reunion.

On January 9, 1954 at the Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, GNB prostrated before Bade Gulam Ali Khan and this generated quite a lot of protest from the leading musicians of the day. They went to the extent of using Subbudu as a cat's paw. He wrote a stinging protest against the prostration. Of course, Subbudu regretted it later!

This absorbing book, which covers the 25 years of GNB's musical career, is a must for every student, performer and 'rasika' of Carnatic music

URDU

A lingua franca of South Asia

Ali Asghar

URDU KI NAI BASTIYAN: Papers presented at the International Seminar on the above topic, edited by Gopi Chand Narang, Sahitya Akademi, 35, Rabindra Bhavan, Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi-110001. Rs. 300.

URDU, A lingua franca of South Asia, has found new settlements in the deserts of the Middle East, on the islands of the Indian Ocean, in Europe, Britain and North America.

Thanks to the immigrants' passion for their idiom, the flame of Urdu's lamp keeps fluttering even against the course of chaotic winds.

Admittedly, Urdu represents a vibrant culture, which ought to flourish anywhere. But unfortunately, a cloud of uncertainty hangs over its future

The tragedy with Urdu is that in a country, which adopted it as its national language, it has no territory of its own. And in India, where it was born, Hindi developed as its rival, whereas in countries like Britain and America it is not easy for it to compete with English in scientific disciplines

Urdu is a language for poetry, mysticism and music; the instant popularity of film songs and the success of 'mushairas' is proof of its irresistible emotional appeal. But can cultural events alone reverse the predicament of Urdu?

If Urdu is to stay alive, a lot more has got to be done for it at home and at school Otherwise, its continued existence beyond the third generation will remain an unfulfilled dream in America and perhaps in Britain as well.

Changing the Arabic-Persian orientation to Roman script with Turkish for a model might serve to induce the new generation to study Urdu

But for a majority of Urdu speakers, change of script is unacceptable. In such a distressing scenario, some prophets of doom feel strongly that by 2050 Urdu will cease to exist in the U.K. but not Shamsur Rahman Faruqi

One cannot make predictions about history, which often creates itself, he asserts.

In addition to discussing various problems faced by the language the papers give a perceptive account of the growth of Urdu in various new habitations while highlighting the contributions of prominent broadcasters, journalists, poets, translators, scholars and fiction writers. Narang deserves warm appreciation of the Urdu community for editing this publication.

Cultural encounter

A SOUTH-SOUTH CONVERSATION RIDDLED WITH CONTEXTUAL COMPLEXITIES



MOBILIZING INDIA – Women, Music, and Migration Between India and Trinidad: Tejaswini Niranjana; Duke University Press, London. $ 21.95.

Nalini Rajan

Most postcolonial academics working in English tend to operate in a North-South context, comparing, favourably or unfavourably, cultural practices in India with those operating in the U.K. or the U.S. This book, however, presents a radical departure from the norm by presenting a South-South conversation, riddled with contextual complexities and mediated by the author. For example, Tejaswini Niranjana analyses the interaction between the Trinidadian chutney-soca performer, Drupatee Ramgoonai and her India Indian counterpart from Goa, Remo Fernandes, who collaborates with Denise Belfon on a song called "Looking for an Indian man". As Niranjana points out: "The 'Indian man' created by Remo's reply ['I'm an Indian man from India'] to Denise Belfon claims representative as well as parodic authority in relation to India even as he positions himself as a daring caricature in Trinidad." At times, the Trinidadian Rikki Jai plays film songs from India that Remo does not recognise — thereby raising questions about the "Indianness" of both singers

Four themes

This fascinating book on mobilising India in the Caribbean (and correspondingly, disavowing the subaltern Trinidadian Indian in India) explores four related and complex themes. These include exchanges between the Trinidadian East Indians and the India Indians, the construction of the "Indianness" of the former and its impact on the latter, the sexual representation of the Trinidadian East Indian woman, and the deployment of her body in the popular fusion of African and Indian musical practices, like "chutney soca", short for "soul" and "calypso" The unfamiliarity of the Trinidadian East Indian context for the India Indian, claims Niranjana, has something to do with the unfamiliarity of the bodies and tongues of the music performers. The issue of "authenticity" is thus recast onto the register of "difference".

To my mind, the best part of the book is chapter three, "Take a Little Chutney, Add a Touch of Kaiso": The Body in the Voice. Why does chutney-soca arouse the extreme audience reaction of either ecstatic celebration or hostile denunciation, in spite of the fact that most Caribbean East Indians do not understand the raunchy, lewd Hindi or Bhojpuri parts of the largely Trinidadian English lyrics? It is not just the double meaning of the words that has such an effect; there is something that spills out of the boundaries of the lyrics or the mellifluousness of the tone into "pure signification", giving body and materiality to the singing voice.

Subaltern study

Niranjana sets the pace early on for what is to follow. In the opening chapter she provides a history of indentured labour in the Caribbean and establishes the subaltern location of the Trinidadian East Indian female, who has been berated for her supposed depravity, in equal measure by the 19th-century Christian missionaries, by leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, and even by the Hindu Sangh Parivar, which refuses to treat the Caribbean Indian (both male and female) on a par with the "superior" Non-Resident Indian of Europe or North America. Curiously enough, given the largely lower caste composition of the Indian migrants to Trinidad, the major conflicts here are not on the basis of caste or community but of race

For the most part, Niranjana succeeds in her project of weaving together the four major themes in this book. Occasionally, she raises controversial issues. For instance, the author believes that the Indian journalist, Vir Sanghvi, exemplifies secular liberalism, because he expresses "incomprehension and horror ... at the spectacle of one who publicly displays religious identity, such as the Hindu East Indian." Surely Sanghvi cannot be seen as representing the many strands of liberal secularism, one of which is the influential liberal multicultural theory of the 1990s?

However, issues such as these do not seriously affect the structural framework of the author's major themes. By recording – at times, facilitating – the interaction between two unlikely partners, the Trinidadian East Indian and the India Indian, Niranjana exposes the vacuity of the Hindu Sangh Parivar's label of "authenticity" for the latter group. This book should have tremendous appeal for those interested in cultural politics both in the Caribbean and in India

A way of life

HINDUISM – A Gandhian Perspective: M V. Nadkarni; Ane Books India, Avantika Niwas, First Floor, 19, Doraiswami Road, T. Nagar, Chennai-600017. Rs. 795.

Prema Nandakumar

Portly, but not obese, *Hinduism. A Gandhian Perspective* is a commendable study in self-control. Taking up such a large canvas as Hinduism and trying to sieve it through the utterly bewildering phenomenon of Mahatma Gandhi could lead one to an unenviable tangle of peoples, events and ideologies. But M.V. Nadkarni has his basal plan firm and wields a racy pen through eight chapters, packed with a good deal of information for the general reader.

According to the author, the Vedic stream of 'Sanatana Dharma' (Hinduism) is not world negating since the concept of 'Purusharthas' does not reject earthly existence. Liberal and peace loving, this Dharma has a ready welcome for a million viewpoints. Even the atheist Sage Jabali of Ayodhya has an honoured place.

The author rightly says that this is a religion, which defies any generalisation or definition. It is a way of life that does not exclude anyone or any thought from its ever-expanding horizon. Tolerance is the very nature of 'Sanatana Dharma'. Even when its temples were vandalised and whole libraries containing its scriptures burnt by Islamic armies, Hinduism did not turn away Islam. Or Christianity. The Zorastrians and Jews have always been welcome.

Social ills

After taxiing thus for a while, Nadkarni takes off with a very relevant wonderment: Is caste system intrinsic to Hinduism? How come a religion, which is so accommodating has been criticised as intolerantly casteist and has even been accused of fostering untouchability? "This myth has harmed the cause of social justice and led to justification of an Indian brand of apartheid."

The Vedas and the Upanishads have said nothing to support the caste system The Dharmashastras do but wherever there was a conflict, the former prevailed. Clarifying the Gita's statements, the author explains 'swadharma' as "one's own sphere of duty" and not any caste-based compartment. With crystalline legends suggesting social and occupational mobility on hand, how can we ever condemn Hinduism as the propounder of casteism? Again and again voices within Hinduism have protested against caste-based discrimination. The Bhakti movements beginning with the Alwars in Tamil Nadu have all worked within the confines of Hinduism to eradicate casteism and untouchability. The Nagar Brahmin Narsi Mehta had openly danced and mingled with the untouchables singing of god-love: "Where distinction is made between one and another/There is no holiness there."

If Hinduism is not the villain, from where did the cancer of caste arise? Nadkarni offers an incisive analysis of the manner in which the division of labour set up for the sake of convenience subsequently got debased into the caste system. This book gives a fascinating view of the manner in which the religion has conserved its past and has permitted changes to reform it. We meditate upon the Vedas for a while, leap through the Bhakti movements and arrive at the modern phase of ISKCON and Sudarshan Kriya. Why, even Deepak Chopra has a modest six pages in this microcosm.

All this sounds good, but Nadkarni does not close his eyes to the ugly reality of communal tensions. He gives nine steps for us to become liberal-minded and walk into a new dawn of fraternity. His hope is infectious.

Stop further hanging, Iraq told

Atul Aneja

DUBAI: Faced with an international outcry against the manner in which the former Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein was executed, the Iraqi government is under pressure to suspend the hangings of his two co-defendants.

On Monday, the New York-based rights group, Human Rights Watch, said in a statement, "The execution of these two, however heinous the crimes involved, is cruel and inhuman punishment that will only drag a deeply flawed process into even greater disrepute."

Powerful Shia groups signalled that the Iraqi government was unlikely to relent. Head of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) Abdulaziz Al Hakim demanded "the Government [should] accelerate the carrying out of the execution of those criminals who have been sentenced."

The SCIRI, known for its links with Iran, is the main Shia party supporting the Government of Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki.

Charges dropped

The Iraqi High Tribunal has dropped charges against Saddam for the killings of Kurds during the "Anfal campaign" in the eighties. Nearly 1,00,000 people allegedly died during this campaign, which took place in the heat of the Iran-Iraq war. Chief Judge Mohammed Oreibi Al-Khalifa said the court had decided to stop all legal proceedings against the former President, since "the death of defendant Saddam was confirmed."

The six defendants in the case include Ali Hassan Al-Majid, known for his alleged use of chemical weapons against the Kurds. There has been no let up in sectarian violence in Iraq.

Nine Shia workers were gunned down on Monday while they were travelling by bus towards Baghdad airport.



Oil supplies to Europe hit

Russia, Belarus in talks over trade dispute

MINSK: A team of negotiators has left Belarus for Moscow to hold emergency talks over a trade dispute which has disrupted oil supplies to Germany and Poland, said the Belarus Foreign Ministry on Monday.

The delegation, headed by the first Deputy Economy Minister, aimed to "resolve the mutual complaints" of Russia and Belarus, said the Ministry's press office.

"The rapid resolution of mutual complaints, which the Belarussian side has suggested, would allow Belarus, Russia and also third countries to solve all problem questions."

Russian oil deliveries through Belarus to Germany and Poland came to a halt on Monday.

Illegal siphoning

Russia accused Belarus of illegally siphoning the oil, but Belarus said the oil had been taken as a form of transit payment imposed on January 1, because Moscow had rejected making payments in any other way.

The German Economy Ministry confirmed that there had been stoppages on the Druzhba oil pipeline, which supplies Russian oil to Germany and Poland.

Economy Minister Michael Glos issued a statement in which he expressed "concern" over the stoppages, even if the situation was not yet "dramatic" with regard to Germany's oil supplies. — AFP

Maoists to join Nepal's Parliament

Interim constitution soon

Ameet Dhakal

- Focus on rebels' disarmament
- U.N. monitoring team begins work

KATHMANDU: The leaders of the ruling Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) and the Maoists on Monday agreed to promulgate the interim constitution and form the interim legislature on January 15.

The decision was reached after a meeting between the leaders of the SPA and the Maoists held at Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's official residence.

The existing House of Representatives will be dissolved and the new interim legislature, which will have Maoist representatives, will endorse the statute with amendments.

Following a growing demand, including from the Supreme Court, for amendment to the draft of the interim constitution, the leaders agreed to discuss suggestions.

The two sides had finalised the draft on December 16 but Mr. Koirala's insistence that arms management should be sorted out first delayed its promulgation.

The United Nations arms monitors opened office in Kathmandu and Nepalgunj on Monday for registration and verifications of the Maoists' arms and combatants. It will further facilitate the promulgation of the constitution.

PTI reports:

The six-hour meeting also discussed the arms management, said Rajendra Mahato, general secretary of Nepal Sadbhavana Party. However, the interim government inclusive of the Maoists will be formed only after the arms management process is completed, Mr. Mahato said.

The meeting also called all political parties and the civil society to cooperate in conducting the Constituent Assembly polls by mid-June in a free, fair and fearless manner, Mr. Mahato said. The political leaders asked all to remain cautious while launching protests.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, CPN-M chairman Prachanda, CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal and Nepali Congress (Democratic) president Sher Bahadur Deuba were among those present in the meeting. — PTI

GLOBESCAN

Hearings in Diana death

Hasan Suroor

LONDON: Conspiracy theories surrounding the death of Princess Diana and her boy friend Dodi Fayed in a Paris car crash 10 years ago were circulating again on Monday as a retired judge started preliminary hearings ahead of an inquest into the case. Dodi's father, Mohammed Al-Fayed, owner of Harrods, who attended the hearing reiterated his allegation that Diana and his son were victims of a murder "plot" by the royal family and intelligence agencies. He dismissed the report of a three-year-long British police investigation into the case as a "whitewash." The inquiry led by John Stevens, former chief of Metropolitan Police, concluded in its report last month that the fatal car crash in a Paris underpass on August 31, 1997 was simply a "tragic accident" as the driver Henri Paul was heavily drunk. Mr. Al-Fayed described the report as a "cover-up". He insisted that the jury at the inquest should be drawn from the public and not consist of members of the royal household. In what was seen as a victory for Mr. Al-Fayed, the judge indicated that the jury would be drawn from ordinary people.

"No talks with Islamists"

DUBAI: Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf said on Monday there would be no negotiations with Islamists who ruled the capital Mogadishu and large parts of southern Somalia before they were ousted late last month. "With regard to holding talks with the courts [Islamists], this will not happen," he told Al Jazeera television in an interview before he flew to the Somali capital for the first time since he became President in 2004. Mr. Yusuf's entry into Mogadishu capped a turnaround in the capital after Islamists were routed by advancing Ethiopian and government troops on December 28. — Reuters

Birds found dead

AUSTIN (TEXAS): Police shut down 10 blocks of businesses in the heart of downtown Austin early on Monday after dozens birds were found dead. Experts were testing for any sort of environmental contaminant or gas or chlorine leaks that might have killed off the animals, police said.— AP

18 terrorists killed as China busts camp

Outfit possibly linked to Al-Qaeda

URUMQI: Police have destroyed a terrorist camp in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region killing18 terrorists, a spokeswoman said on Monday.

One policeman was killed and another wounded in the gunbattle on Friday in the mountains of Pamirs plateau in south Xinjiang, she said.

The police captured 17 terrorists and are searching for many, she said.

They also seized 22 grenades and material for making 1,500 more.

The training camp was run by the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a group that the United Nations in 2002 labelled a terrorist organisation, she said.

It is believed that more than 1,000 ETIM members have been trained by Al-Qaeda.

The former head of the terrorist group, Hasan Mahsum, was shot dead by Pakistani troops on October 2, 2003 in a joint anti-terror operation along the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mahsum was accused of plotting a series of violent terrorist activities in recent years, including robbery and murder in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang, and murders in the Xinjiang's Hotan region, which caused heavy loss of life and property. — Xinhua

TAMIL NADU OPEN UNIVERSITY
The Second Annual Convocation 2006
Thursday, the 11th January, 2007
NOTIFICATION
The Second Annual Convocation 2006 will be held at the Kalaivanar Arangam, Wallaja Road, Chepauk, Chennai - 600 005 on Thursday, 11th January 2007 at 4.00 p.m. His Excellency, Thiru Surjit Singh Barnala, the Governor of Tamil Nadu and Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Open University will preside over the Convocation. Hon'ble Dr K Ponmudy, Minister for Higher Education, Government of Tamil Nadu and Pro-Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Open University will participate. Sir John Daniel, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Common Wealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada, will be the Chief Guest and will deliver the Convocation address. "Kavi Pararasu" R. Vairamuthu will be conferred the Degree of Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa).
REGISTRAR

More violence in Bangladesh

DHAKA: Scores of people were injured and at least 50 detained as violence erupted in Bangladesh on Monday during a nationwide three-day blockade enforced by the major Awami League grouping to press for electoral reforms ahead of the January 22 general elections.

Riot police fired rubber bullets and lobbed tear gas shells at demonstrators affiliated to the former Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina Wajed's Awami League led-mega alliance during a communication blockade that paralysed the country.

Army and paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles troops patrolled the streets in Dhaka and other major cities mounting automatic weapons on armoured cars. — PTI

No "blank cheque" on Iraq: Pelosi

Rick Klein

Troop increase a tragic mistake, says Senator Biden

WASHINGTON: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said on Sunday Democrats would not give President George Bush a "blank cheque" to continue to the war in Iraq, and suggested that Democratic leaders may seek to deny the administration funding to send more troops to Iraq.

Activists step up their demands to end the war, but find the Democrats divided.

Ms. Pelosi, a California Democrat, repeatedly rejected suggestions that Democrats would cut off funding for the war, a step being urged by many liberal activists. But if the President wants a surge in U.S. troops in Iraq — a step he is expected to outline this week — Democrats might move to stop him from using any new funds for that purpose, she said.

"If the President chooses to escalate the war, in his budget request we want to see a distinction between what is there to support the troops who are there now," Ms. Pelosi said on CBS's "Face the Nation."

"The American people and the Congress support those troops," she added. "But if the President wants to add to this mission, he is going to have to justify it. And this is new for him, because up until now the Republican Congress has given him a blank cheque with no oversight, no standards, no conditions."

Ms. Pelosi's comments mark the first suggestion by a Democratic congressional leader that Congress could use its authority over the nation's finances to hasten an end to the war. Her remarks point toward an aggressive stance on Iraq from congressional Democrats in their opening days of control of the House and Senate.

Mr. Bush is expected to address the nation on Wednesday to unveil his Iraq strategy, which may include a short-term increase in U.S. forces.

Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that he planned to introduce a "resolution of disapproval" to put the Senate on record in opposing an increase in troops. He said such an increase would be a "tragic mistake." But he cautioned that there is probably little Congress can do, given that it voted to authorise the war in 2002. — New York Times News Service

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ROCK MECHANICS
(An Autonomous Research Institute under Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India)
CHAMPION REEFS, KOLAR GOLD FIELDS-563117
Phone: 08153-275003-009, Fax: 08153-275002, e-mail: nirm@sancharnet.in
An ISO 9001:2000 Certified Research Institute : Web:http://www.nirm.in
Advt. No. 01/2006 Date: December 6, 2006
VACANCY FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR

The Institute: The National Institute of Rock Mechanics (NIRM) is a premier center for research in applied and basic rock mechanics Set up in 1988 under the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, the Institute provides research and consultancy services broadly in the areas of mine design, rock excavation, ground support, geo-technical engineering etc. including development of safe and efficient mining and assessment of stability of surface and underground excavations

The Job Profile: The Director is the Chief Executive Officer. He shall be responsible for the overall functioning of the Institute and planning for its future course of action fulfilling the objectives of the Institute. He is expected to take the Institute on a growth path to make it a center of excellence and self reliant financially

The Candidate: The candidate should be dynamic and competent scientist/ engineer/ technologist with oustanding contribution in the area of rock mechanics. The requirements are as follows:

Essential Qualification	:	1st Class B.E/B.Tech. or 1st Class M.Tech./M.E. in Mining/Civil Engineering or 1st Class Post Graduate in Earth Sciences
Desirable	:	Ph.D. in Mining/Civil/Earth Sciences related to Rock Mechanics/Geotechnical Engineering.
Experience	:	Over 20 years of experience in research/teaching/industry with outstanding contribution in rock mechanics/geotechnical/mining/civil engineering projects.
Scale of Pay	:	Rs. 18400-500-22400
Age	:	Preferably below 55

Age and experience may be relaxed by the Search-cum-Selection Committee in case of candidates found otherwise deserving and competent.

Terms of appointment: The offer of appointment shall be on contract, initially for a period of SIX years from the date of assumption of charge. The incumbent will be on a probation for a period of one year.

Selection Procedure: The selection of the Director will be done by the Search-cum-Selection Committee which may also consider contact/ nominated candidates for the post. Candidates called for the interview will be reimbursed AC II tier railway fare by the shortest route.

The Package: The perquisites include excellent accommodation at a nominal fee, a car with the driver and consultancy permissible up to 100% of total emoluments.

How to Apply: **The candidates those who have applied for the post in response to our advertisement No. 02/2005 dated 2nd July 2005 would be considered and need not to apply again.** Applications should be made in the prescribed form that can be had from the Director, National Institute of Rock Mechanics, Champions Reefs, Kolar Gold Fields-563117, Karnataka against the written request on or before **5th February 2007**. Duly filled in application form with copies of proof of age, qualification and experience along with a fee of Rs. 200/- by DD drawn in favour of NIRM payable at (State Bank of Mysore, KGF Branch or Canara Bank / Corporation Bank, Robertsonpet Branch, KGF) may be forwarded to the **Director, NIRM, K.G.F.-563117**, on the above address. A copy of the same may be also be sent to **The Director (Technical), Ministry of Mines (Govt. of India), III Floor, D-Wing, Room No. 311, Shastri Bhavan, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001.**

Applications from persons employed in Central/ State Government/PSUs/Universities/Autonomous bodies should forward their applications through proper channel. Advance application may be sent but No Objection Certificate should be produced at the time of interactive session. The candidates willing to join on deputation will be governed by the relevant rules of the GOI on the subject

Last date: The last date for receipt of applications is **10th February 2007**. Applications received after the due date will not be considered and no communication thereof will not be entertained. Applications will be treated in strict confidence. Short-listed candidates may have to attend an interactive process at New Delhi. The exact date and venue would be intimated to the short-listed candidates.

Note: The application form can also be downloaded from "Vacancy Notice" at the following link:
http://www.nirm.in/
davp 1586/2/2006 Controller of Administration

PLENTIFUL SOURCE

Uncontroversial stem cells found

Stem cells from embryos are the most adaptable

Alok Jha

Scientists have found a source of stem cells that does not involve destroying embryos. The cells can be harvested easily from the fluid surrounding developing babies in the womb and could help overcome ethical concerns.

It has been known for decades that the placenta and the amniotic fluid (the liquid that envelops a developing baby) contain important cells. "We asked the question: is there a possibility that within this cell population we can capture true stem cells? The answer is yes," said Anthony Atala, director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine at Wake Forest in North Carolina, who led the research. Stem cells can grow into any type of body tissue and are used to research cures for conditions such as diabetes and brain disorders, including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. It is hoped that one day they may be used to grow replacement tissue that is a perfect genetic match for patients.

Stem cells from embryos are highly prized because they are the most adaptable. They are hard to obtain, however, because they are normally harvested from embryos left over from fertility treatments. Anti-abortion campaigners argue this leads to destruction of human life. Adults also have stem cells, but these can turn into fewer types of body tissue.

Researchers said the newly discovered amniotic fluid-derived stem (AFS) cells represent an intermediate stage between embryonic and adult stem cells. They grew AFS cells into muscle, bone, fat, blood vessel, nerve and liver cells. "Our hope is that these cells will provide a valuable resource for tissue repair and for engineered organs as well," said Prof. Atala. His results are published in the journal *Nature Biotechnology*.

"These cells are capable of extensive self-renewal, a defining property of stem cells," he said. "They also can be used to produce a broad range of cells that may be valuable for therapy."

Aside from ethical concerns, it is difficult to extract cells from leftover embryos, which are often of poor quality. AFS cells are available from samples taken for amniocentesis — which involves testing the amniotic fluid for signs of genetic disorders — and from the placenta. Around 1 per cent of cells in these samples have been found to be stem cells. They grow quickly without turning into tumours, a problem for other types of stem cell.

"So far we've been successful with every cell type we've attempted to produce from these stem cells," said Prof. Atala. "The AFS cells can also produce mature cells that meet tests of function, which suggests their therapeutic value."


Dr. Anthony Atala, head of Wake Forest's regenerative medicine institute, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina on Friday. — PHOTO: AP

Researchers grew brain cells from AFS cells and implanted them into mice suffering from a degenerative brain disease. The cells successfully repopulated the damaged parts of the brain. Viable bone cells were made the same way.

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GANDHI'S 9/11

The day that's now synonymous with terror is also the day when satyagraha was born. But can non-violence be relevant today? Sunday Times *explores the ultimate Experiment with Truth*

Avijit Ghosh | TNN



When Osama bin Laden's men slammed aeroplanes into New York's Twin Towers on September 11, the day's abbreviated form 9/11, immediately became a shorthand for violence. And five years down the line, it continues to be so.

Few remember that the same day — 9/11 — was actually synonymous with non-violence. Exactly 100 years ago — September 11, 1906, to be precise — this day also marked the birth of satyagraha, although the term itself was coined at a later date (*see box*).

Over the next century, satyagraha — which literally means the force born of truth and love or non-violence — has been put to test in different political theatres around the globe. In his book, *Gandhi As Disciple And Mentor*, political scientist Thomas Weber writes about its influence on world leaders such as Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Dalai Lama and Lech Walesa. Back home, Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement and his efforts at making Chambal dacoits surrender, and Sunderlal Bahuguna's Chipko movement are a few examples of Gandhian methods being applied with success in varying degrees. The recent Bollywood hit *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*, where *Gandhi-giri* is put to test, also demonstrates that satyagraha still has the power to move people. And yet it is the violent 9/11 that occupies the mindspace of the majority.

The question that immediately arises is. In the backdrop of rising terrorism and with nation-states themselves becoming more violent and oppressive, could satyagraha still be used as a method to attain larger political goals?

Historians and political scientists believe satyagraha can be effective even today. But they also point out that the process is time-consuming and that the satyagrahi's opponent must possess a conscience. Because, as historian B R Nanda points out, in the ultimate analysis, "satyagraha is a battle for the opponent's mind." He illustrates the Gandhi effect on one of his opponents. When Gandhi left South Africa for good in 1914 after spending 21 years there, the man at the receiving end of his campaigns, General Jan Smuts said: "The saint has left the shore. Thank God, forever." Several decades later, Smuts was a member of the Churchill war cabinet. During a meeting, the British PM is said to have called Gandhi a quisling, a synonym for traitor. Smuts countered it saying that Gandhi was one of the greatest men on earth. "That's the long-term effect of satyagraha," says Nanda.

Historian Bipan Chandra and political scientist Imtiaz Ahmed believe satyagraha works primarily when the opponent has a conscience or moral fibre. Gandhi himself was aware that satyagraha may not work against dictatorship. Chandra recounts an incident to make his point. In 1937, a Chinese delegation meeting Gandhi asked him how they could fight Japanese aggression through a non-violent struggle. Gandhi replied that such a struggle requires long training and that they should go back and counter aggression the way they knew best.

"In violence, you attack the enemy. Non-violence appeals to the conscience of the enemy. It is not anti-opponent. Satyagraha aims at stirring up the finer side of the opponent," says Chandra.

The logical question that follows is: Would Gandhian methods work today against Bin Laden's terrorism or George Bush's neo-imperialism? According to Ahmed, satyagraha anticipates coming face to face with the opponent. Gandhi always worked from the centre of political action. However, Al-Qaida operates from a distant, isolationist position making it impossible to counter it through satyagraha. "Osama may be acceptable to many Muslims. But he neither has the skill nor the moral fibre to mobilise Muslims as a political force to wage a non-violent struggle against US imperialism," says Ahmed. However, he believes that given the right leadership, satyagraha can be successful against the Bush regime. "If satyagraha worked against the British, why can't it work against the US?"

Ahmed also feels that ultimately the US failure to control Iraq is due to its inability to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. "More than the insurgency, it is the silent resistance of the common Iraqi that is the biggest worry of the US. And it is this struggle that could ultimately lead to US withdrawal," he says.

In that sense, another version of Gandhi's non-cooperation movement continues in Iraq.

NAMING SATYAGRAHA

"None of us knew what name to give our movement (in South Africa). A small prize was therefore announced in *Indian Opinion* (a magazine Gandhi brought out) to be awarded to the reader who invented the best designation for our struggle. We thus received a number of suggestions. The meaning of the struggle had been then fully discussed in *Indian Opinion* and the competitors for the prize had fairly sufficient material to serve as a basis for their exploration. Maganlal Gandhi was one of the competitors and he suggested the word, *sadagraha*, meaning firmness in a good cause. I liked the word but it did not represent the whole idea I wished to connote. I therefore corrected it to Satyagraha. Truth (*satya*) implies love, and firmness (*agraha*) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement Satyagraha, that is to say, the Force which is born of truth and love or non-violence."

— M K Gandhi in *Satyagraha in South Africa*

What happened on Sept 11, 1906

On September 12, 1906, Johannesburg's *Rand Daily Mail* reported an event that had taken place in the city's old Empire Theatre the previous day. The report said: "The united protest of the British Indian community against the Draft Asiatic Ordinance constituted one of the most remarkable gatherings Johannesburg has seen. The size of meeting, the enthusiasm of the audience — practically the entire Indian population ceased work for the day — and the depth of feeling displayed formed a striking testimony to the indignation which the proposed legislation has aroused."

The newspaper was reporting the birth of one of the greatest ideas of modern times: non-violent resistance as a form of public protest. Its architect was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

In an old photograph published in Eric Itzkin's book *Gandhi's Johannesburg*, Empire Theatre comes across as a stolid, rectangular building resembling a government office. But exactly a hundred years ago, the atmosphere inside was anything but officious. Around 3,000 Indians working in different parts of Transvaal province had gathered there. "The old Empire Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling. I could read in every face the expectation of something strange to be done or happen," writes Gandhi in the book, *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

> In 1896, when I was in Calcutta, the late Mr Saunders came to the assistance as also did *The Times of India*, which paper has always advocated the cause of British Indians in S Africa.
>
> —Gandhi in a speech delivered at Hotel Cecil, London (November 29, 1906) for the delegates from Transvaal (*Collected Works of Gandhi, Vol VI, 1906-07*)

Many of these Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, had arrived as indentured labourers in South Africa. They were Gujaratis, Tamils and Telugus. Over the years, many had become successful businessmen and traders. Yet the proposed ordinance required every Asian to register their fingerprints and carry registration certificates. Or else, they could be deported. This, as Gandhi wrote, virtually equated them with criminals. A shocked Gandhi immediately met some influential members of the Indian community. This set the stage for the 9/11 meeting which was presided by Abdul Ghani, chairman, Transvaal British Indian Association.

The most important of the several resolutions passed at the meeting said: "Indians solemnly determined not to submit to the Ordinance in the event of its becoming law and to suffer all the penalties attaching to such non-submission." Gandhi outlined the course of action and its consequences: "We might have to endure every hardship that we can imagine, and wisdom lies in pledging ourselves on the understanding that we shall have to suffer all that and worse. If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that if the entire community manfully stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory."

Historian Robert A Huttenback in *Gandhi in South Africa* writes, "With a roar of enthusiasm, the Transvaal Indians rose to take the pledge and a new political technique was born."

Strangely, Empire Theatre was destroyed in a fire the next day. Writes Gandhi, "Friends brought me the news, and congratulated the community upon this good omen, which signified to them that the Ordinance would meet the same fate as the theatre."

It did. But only after a long struggle where satyagraha was put to stern test.

— Avijit Ghosh

ROLE CALL: MAHATMA UNDER THE ARCLIGHTS

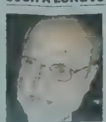
THE OTHER N-WEAPON



When I read the script of *Maine Gandhi Ko Nahi Mara*, the actor in me was fascinated — it was a great role. Soon enough I got so involved with the film that I decided to turn producer as well. As a small-town boy brought up in a newly free India, Gandhi was always an integral part of my consciousness. I believe the power of non-violence supersedes the power of any nuclear weapon. The unbelievable phenomenon that was Gandhi single-handedly changed the course of a country's destiny. For me, Gandhi stands for originality, honesty and a straightforward attitude. Researching for the role was like a check on my conscience. And by the end of my research my faith in Gandhian ideals was reaffirmed.

Anupam Kher | protagonist, Maine Gandhi Ko Nahi Mara

SUCH A LONG JOURNEY



I believe South Africa was Gandhi's laboratory. Both his philosophy as well as his political weaponry were finetuned there. Gandhi's monumental journey from a regular, almost timid youngster who showed no particular promise to a man who empowered a powerless community makes for an inspiring story. My father was a Gandhian and I remember wearing khadi as a child and complaining bitterly about it then. To go inside the Mahatma's mind as a filmmaker so many years later was both fascinating as well as challenging. Today I can safely claim that the man and his thought process are embedded firmly in my system.

Shyam Benegal | director, The Making of the Mahatma

AN IDEA IN EVOLUTION



The personal life and struggle of a very public person, no less than Mahatma Gandhi himself, was a very compelling tale to tell. My play talks about a man giving up the role of a father to become father of the nation. Gandhi was very tough on himself and expected those around him to be the same. In my play, I told the tragedy of a family — the price that was paid for the freedom of a nation. I believe Gandhi's ideals are relevant particularly in today's times because he's an 'operative myth' that still lives on in contemporary consciousness. Gandhi is a dynamic idea that keeps reinventing itself.

Feroz Khan | director, Mahatma vs Gandhi

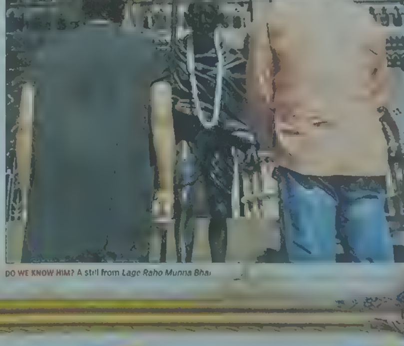
GANDHI-GIRI TRIUMPHS



Honestly, I wasn't sure if a film on Gandhi would work. I had to be sensitive towards the Mahatma along with making him relevant to the masses. I believe Gandhi was a success because he spoke the language of the people. *Gandhi-giri* is nothing but adopting a unique, non-violent method to solve a problem. I don't think I'm error-free. But I believe in Gandhian ideals, which is why I made the film. Today when someone tells me they came out of the theatre and threw away the ticket, only to return and pick it up and put it in the dustbin, I feel my movie has been a success.

Rajkumar Hirani | director, Lage Raho Munna Bhai

—Interviews by Anubha Sawhney



DO WE KNOW HIM? A still from *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*

TIMES Personal Messages

THANKSGIVING

THANK You St Jude Novena ... vior St Michael ... Swamigal Lord Muruga for favor's granted LJGK

Govt adds to joy of LD students

HC Nod For Concessions Till Standard X

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: For students suffering from Learning Disability (LD), the going may just become easier. Not only did the state education department turn the July 20th high court order on mandatory concessions for LD students into a government resolution, but also extended the ambit of the order to include all LD students from classes I to XII. The HC ruling was for students up to class X.

"I think this is a fantastic move. This is like a reward for us," said an exuberant advocate Sheetal Kumar, whose petition on behalf of two parents whose sons had been denied concession, resulted in the HC order.

"It is also important that the schools are educated on LD instead of wasting time on baseline tests. The state should also concentrate on de-segregating children who are classified as bright average and duffers," said Dr Harish Shetty, pioneer of the LD movement in India.

The court order as well as the resolution are based on a scheme that was put forth by a committee of experts in the field of education.

Dr Madhuri Kulkarni, head of the department of paediatrics, Sion Hospital, one of the experts on the committee, is thrilled with the "positive attitude shown by the government." She feels that teachers will now look at LD students with more empathy. "Denying an LD student concessions is like denying spectacles to a person who needs them," she added.

The resolution states that students with LD should be examined by a neurologist, psychologist and in rural areas, even a paediatrician. On confirming LD and obtaining the requisite certificate, students will be given 25% extra time during an exams, a writer for either part or the entire paper, and where necessary, even a typewriter.

From classes I to IX, invigilators should read the question paper to LD students. Students with specific dyslexia, dysgraphia from classes I to IX will be exempted from language subjects other than English. They will also be exempted from drawing graphs, diagrams charts, maps and figures. They will also be provided with 20 grace marks.

For students with Dyscalculia (Mathematical Disorder), teachers must overlook number reversal as well as a confusion in mathematical signs while correcting the paper. Students of classes V and VI will study class V maths, those in classes VII and VIII will study class VI maths. Those in classes IX and X will study class VII maths. Teachers have been instructed not to concentrate on just the final answer arrived at by the student, but to look at the steps taken to arrive at the answer.

They should be exempted from spelling error and cursive writing should not be forced upon them.

In a second HC order delivered recently, after a LD student had difficulties in accountancy and book-keeping in class XII, all class XII students have been allowed the use of a calculator for these subjects.

KNOW THEIR PROBLEM

LD includes a cluster of disorder in the basic cognitive and psychological processes involved in using language or performing mathematical calculations, affecting persons of average or above average intelligence. This results in a gap between what a child knows and what he puts down on paper. Often LD children think faster than they write, thus missing words in a sentence or letters in a word. They also mirror write and confuse mathematical signs.



SC defers hearing on Salem plea

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The supreme court on Friday deferred till September 18 the petition filed by gangster Abu Salem challenging the separation of his trial from the rest of the 123 accused in the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts case.

Salem's counsel K T S Tulsi mentioned the petition before a bench of justices K G Balakrishnan and D K Jain for an early hearing, but additional solicitor general Amrender Sharan opposed it. The bench then decided to hear it as fixed by the SC registry on September 18.

1993 SERIAL BLASTS

Salem moved the apex court after the Bombay high court allowed him to withdraw his petition there, challenging the separation of his trial from that of the rest of the accused. He has challenged the charges framed against him.

Salem had challenged a June 13, 2006 order of the special TADA court which separated his trial from the rest of the accused whose trial was over and for whom the judgment day has been fixed as September 12.

Bhat resigns as prosecutor in Mahajan case

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Srikant Bhat, special public prosecutor appointed by the state in the Pramod Mahajan murder case, has resigned. In a brief letter to deputy chief minister R R Patil and public prosecutor Rohini Salian, Bhat said he would not appear on behalf of the state in the matter and that alternate arrangements should be made to fill up the vacancy.

Bhat did not elaborate on the reasons for his resignation. Media reports in the past had suggested that he was not getting along with the police during the probe into Mahajan's murder.

When contacted Bhat refused to comment. "I will make a complete statement only before the court on Monday when the case comes up for hearing. Then I will give the reasons for my resignation," he said. The case could not be heard in court on Friday as judge Srihari Davare was on leave.

The trial in the Mahajan murder case has been getting delayed for one reason or another. First, accused Pravin Mahajan fell out with his defence advocate, Nandkumar Rajurkar, and asked the court to give him two weeks' time to find another lawyer to represent him. He was given only a week's time and the trial was expected to commence on September 1. But on that day Pravin could not be brought to court from jail because the police had their hands full with the Ganpati festival. Hence the matter was adjourned to Friday.

On Friday, Pravin was brought to court around 1 30 pm, but the trial could not commence as the judge was on leave.

SLOW PACE



Declining to give any reason for the move, Bhat said he will make a statement before the court only on Monday

Autopsy report confirms murder of Nerul woman

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

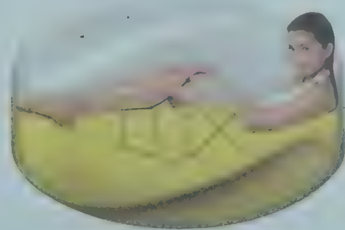
Navi Mumbai: The post-mortem report of Kamini Giri (26), whose body was recovered from a pond in Nerul on Thursday, has confirmed that the housewife was murdered and then dumped in the pond along Palm Beach Road.

Deputy commissioner of police (zone 1) Amar Jadhav told TOI: "A case of murder has been registered today, and the search for the missing nine-month-old infant is still on. I have sent police parties to various orphanages in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai to check if any new baby was admitted there in the last few days." He said the autopsy report has revealed injury marks around the neck and on one hand of the victim. "We have called the victim's parents from Orissa for inquiry and are also questioning her neighbours and in-laws," said DCP Jadhav.

When asked if there are any injury marks around her private parts, indicating any kind of sexual assault, Jadhav said, "it cannot be ascertained at the moment", adding that only further chemical tests could confirm if the victim was raped or not.

Meanwhile, at the Nerul police station on Friday, several residents of Gharkul housing society, sector 16, were present to give their statements concerning this case.

Radiance starts in the shower



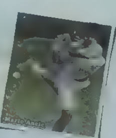
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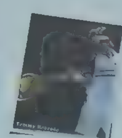
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FULL-TIME PGP

Eligibility: Minimum 3-year Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in any discipline. Final year degree students, completing their final examinations by June 15, 2007, may also apply.

Admission Test (XAT): All applicants will have to appear for the Admission Test to be conducted by **XLRI, Jamshedpur**, on **7th January 2007.** For this, applicants have to log on to **www.xlri.edu** and **apply online for XAT**, before separately applying to XIMB.

ii) Two-year full-time programme for Post-Graduate Diploma in Rural Management, 2007-09 (AICTE approved).

FULL-TIME PGDRM

Eligibility: Minimum 3-year Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in any discipline. Final year degree students, completing their final examinations by June 15, 2007, may also apply.

Admission Test (IRMA or XAT): Applicants will have to appear for one of the following Admission Tests. a) The Test to be conducted by **Institute of Rural Management, Anand, on 26th November 2006** or b) **XAT** to be conducted by **XLRI, Jamshedpur on 7th January 2007.** Apply for one of the tests before separately applying to XIMB

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The lows of the Presidential contest

The debate on the relative merits of candidates has been uninformed and partisan, bordering on the abusive on occasion.

Vidya Subrahmaniam

In a few days from now, Rashtrapati Bhavan will have a new occupant — most likely a woman. Yet so unedifying has been the run-up to the presidential election that few will dare mention this milestone, much less celebrate it. When the United Progressive Alliance presented Pratibha Patil as its presidential candidate, the incumbent first citizen had heartily welcomed it. "Fantastic," he had gushed. The reaction was considered typical of the man — poetic, quixotic, almost other-worldly. That a week later A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was signalling an interest in fighting Ms. Patil for an extended term on Raisina hill is an irony too large to miss.

But this is not the only low point of this election — an election marked by acrimony, confusion, petty showmanship, and mud-slinging. The debate on the relative merits of candidates has been uninformed and partisan, bordering on the abusive with the participants sparing no one, not even the late K.R. Narayanan. At the National Democratic Alliance's daily press briefing, a reporter questioned Sushma Swaraj on the logic of seeking a second term for President Kalam when the Alliance had refused to extend the same courtesy to President Narayanan. In 2002, Atal Bihari Vajpayee had bluntly told K.R. Narayanan not even to consider a second term. Five years later, Ms. Swaraj rubbed it in. "Don't compare the two men," she yelled back at the reporter.

With the remarkable K.R. Narayanan, *indisputably one of our best Presidents, so rudely dismissed, it followed that* much worse was in store for Ms. Patil. The UPA-Left's nominee has been viciously attacked for her alleged "low stature" — not just by Ms. Swaraj & Co. but by media celebrities intent on destroying her credentials for the only reason that they had never heard of her or of her work.

"Who is Pratibha Patil?" Over the past week, commentators and politicians have tossed this question about, barely able to conceal their contempt for a woman so understated that we have to turn to her CV for enlightenment. The one-page statement is much like Ms. Patil herself — refreshingly matter-of-fact and unembroidered. Yet even the bare facts impress: a practising lawyer before she joined politics, five consecutive terms as MLA, a clutch of portfolios in the Maharashtra Government, member of the 10th Lok Sabha, deputy chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, and Governor of Rajasthan. All this topped by untrumpeted, constructive social work: engineering college for rural students, hostel for working women, development fund and cooperative bank for economically depressed women, schools for the poor and the disabled, and so on.

Just in case the picture this presents is of a dour elder citizen, there is more — details missing in her CV, details unknown to media circles in the big metros but recalled with pride in her home town and electoral constituency. Ms. Patil was a champion table-tennis player and quite the toast of MJ college in Jalgaon winning a beauty title in 1962, years before such contests would become the staple of newspaper pullouts. In 1965, three years after she won her first Assembly seat, she married educator Devisingh Shekhawat and became Pratibha Devisingh Patil — decades before the hyphenated surname became a feminist statement. As Ms. Patil quietly climbed the political ladder, her husband willingly took a backseat to her.

Yet this exceptional career woman is apparently worth nothing in an environment that so easily allows PR and networking skills to mask the lack of real talent. Today the acid test for a seeker of public office is not what she has achieved but how visible and how well-connected she is. "Who do you know?" is a question that precedes "what do you know?" Conversely, anyone outside the charmed circle of the opinion making class is a "nobody."

Ms. Patil's choice has been faulted on a host of counts. She was not her party's first choice, not even its second or third choice but was a compromise candidate agreed upon for the reason that she offended no one. She was a Congress loyalist who stuck by Indira Gandhi in the aftermath of her 1977 defeat. But her worst offence surely was that she lacked a dazzling public profile. The 72-year-old Ms. Patil may have held an array of posts in a career spanning 45 years, never losing an election in all this time, her strength of character evident in the way she wielded the office of Governor — she returned the Rajasthan Religious Freedom Bill 2006 but this act was unaccompanied by fuss or fanfare — but for Ms. Swaraj she could never compare with Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, "a leader of immense public stature." Mr. Shekhawat became Vice-President on the strength of his three stints as Chief Minister of Rajasthan. And as his followers would only too gladly admit, his many sterling qualities include a mastery of 'tod-phod rajneeti' (manipulative politics). That the Vice-President aspires to be President without the necessary numbers in the electoral college speaks to this skill. Who else but Mr. Shekhawat can convert adversity to advantage?

Politics of here and now

Unfortunately, politics has long been reduced to the here and now. Ms. Patil cannot hold a candle to Mr. Shekhawat. And President Kalam is a super hero who must seek re-election because incessant e-mails and instant polls have decreed so. The President's political backers feign outrage at the Congress' refusal to grant him a second term. Yet in 2002, he was as much a compromise candidate as Ms. Patil is today because of dissensions within the NDA — the Bharatiya Janata Party's "own man" P.C. Alexander not finding favour with the allies, and Vice-President Krishan Kant agreeable to all but the BJP. A long impasse and much wrangling later, Dr. Kalam came in by the same principle. He had an illustrious career but more than that he offended no one.

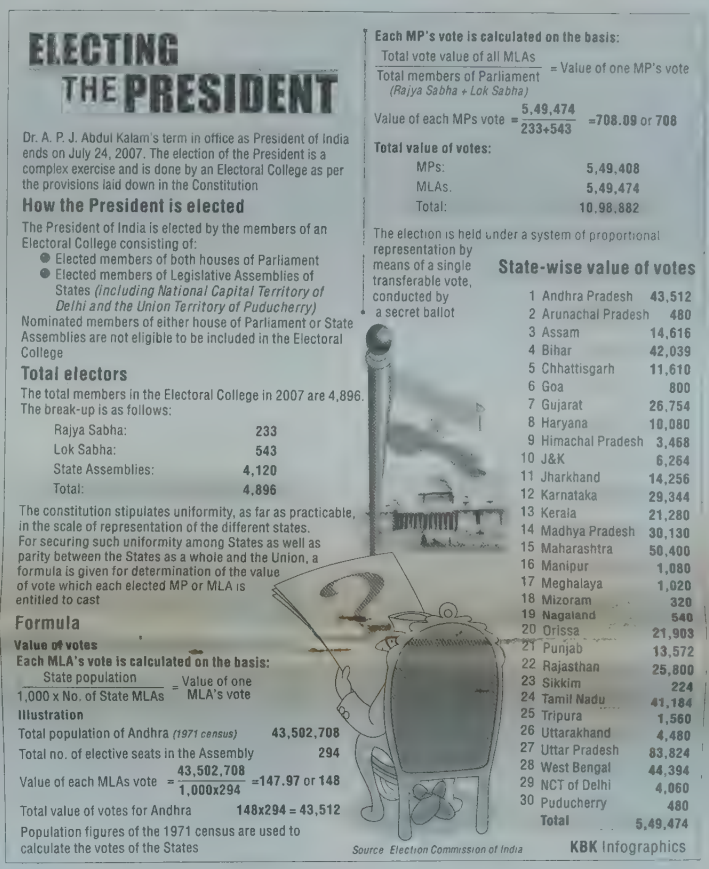
Ms. Patil's detractors have sought to strip her of her dignity because she was not the UPA's "natural choice." She has been savaged for daring to view her candidature as an honour for women. This was symbolism at its worst, fumed the critics. It was a case of an unheard of nobody over-reading the importance of her own undeserved elevation. "What has she done for women?" screamed a page-3 diva known best for her pulp fiction. She might find a quick visit to Maharashtra educative. Yet the point of Ms. Patil's possible promotion to President is not about what it will accomplish for the toiling women of this country. Appointments to high office have a symbolism not necessarily connected to the uplift of the masses. Should Hillary Clinton become United States President, it is unlikely commentators will deny the symbolism of that victory or run her down saying American women had nothing to gain by her taking office.

Mayawati and K.R. Narayanan each created history when assuming the office of Chief Minister and President respectively. That the appointments did not instantly uplift the Dalit masses cannot and should not take away from the rich symbolism of the achievements. Dr. Kalam's elevation to President — in the backdrop of the Gujarat pogrom — afforded the NDA a chance to refurbish its tarnished secular credentials.

In their eagerness to cash in on President Kalam's popularity, his backers have done him enormous harm. They goaded a near-consensus President — in 2002, he was supported by all barring the Left — to consider entering the fray as a factional candidate. The President has mercifully pulled back from that perilous path but his quoted "willingness" to contest has done the damage — to the man and to his office. If only for a few days, the detached savant showed glimpses of ambition.

Compare this with K.R. Narayanan who announced his exit the minute the NDA proposed Dr. Kalam's name. Just days ago, Ms. Swaraj summarily dismissed President Narayanan, saying he couldn't be compared with Dr. Kalam. It might have been a Freudian slip by the BJP spokesperson. In office, President Narayanan was a towering figure, twice returning for reconsideration questionable Union Cabinet decisions. He stood his ground on tricky issues — refusing to confer the Bharat Ratna on Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and speaking his mind on the Gujarat pogrom of 2002. He called it a "grave crisis of society and the nation" and wrote to Mr. Vajpayee seeking Army intervention to control the killings. The letter, written in his last days in office, ensured that he would be denied a second term.

Dr. Kalam has been called the People's President. True, his simplicity has won him a huge fan following. Yet he signed a late night proclamation allowing the dissolution of the Bihar Assembly which the Supreme Court held to be illegal and "a subversion of the Constitution." Thanks to him, a portrait of Savarkar hangs in the Central hall of Parliament — right opposite the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi in whose assassination he was once implicated.


ELECTING THE PRESIDENT
Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's term in office as President of India ends on July 24, 2007. The election of the President is a complex exercise and is done by an Electoral College as per the provisions laid down in the Constitution
How the President is elected
The President of India is elected by the members of an Electoral College consisting of:
Elected members of both houses of Parliament
Elected members of Legislative Assemblies of States (including National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry)
Nominated members of either house of Parliament or State Assemblies are not eligible to be included in the Electoral College
Total electors
The total members in the Electoral College in 2007 are 4,896. The break-up is as follows:
Rajya Sabha: 233
Lok Sabha: 543
State Assemblies: 4,120
Total: 4,896
The constitution stipulates uniformity, as far as practicable, in the scale of representation of the different states. For securing such uniformity among States as well as parity between the States as a whole and the Union, a formula is given for determination of the value of vote which each elected MP or MLA is entitled to cast
Formula
Value of votes
Each MLA's vote is calculated on the basis:
State population / 1,000 x No. of State MLAs = Value of one MLA's vote
Illustration
Total population of Andhra (1971 census) 43,502,708
Total no. of elective seats in the Assembly 294
Value of each MLAs vote = 43,502,708 / 1,000x294 =147.97 or 148
Total value of votes for Andhra 148x294 = 43,512
Population figures of the 1971 census are used to calculate the votes of the States
Each MP's vote is calculated on the basis:
Total vote value of all MLAs / Total members of Parliament (Rajya Sabha + Lok Sabha) = Value of one MP's vote
Value of each MPs vote = 5,49,474 / 233+543 =708.09 or 708
Total value of votes:
MPs: 5,49,408
MLAs. 5,49,474
Total: 10,98,882
The election is held under a system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote, conducted by a secret ballot
State-wise value of votes
1 Andhra Pradesh 43,512
2 Arunachal Pradesh 480
3 Assam 14,616
4 Bihar 42,039
5 Chhattisgarh 11,610
6 Goa 800
7 Gujarat 26,754
8 Haryana 10,080
9 Himachal Pradesh 3,468
10 J&K 6,264
11 Jharkhand 14,256
12 Karnataka 29,344
13 Kerala 21,280
14 Madhya Pradesh 30,130
15 Maharashtra 50,400
16 Manipur 1,080
17 Meghalaya 1,020
18 Mizoram 320
19 Nagaland 540
20 Orissa 21,903
21 Punjab 13,572
22 Rajasthan 25,800
23 Sikkim 224
24 Tamil Nadu 41,184
25 Tripura 1,560
26 Uttarakhand 4,480
27 Uttar Pradesh 83,824
28 West Bengal 44,394
29 NCT of Delhi 4,060
30 Puducherry 480
Total 5,49,474
Source Election Commission of India
KBK Infographics

THE HINDU

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 2007

An unpleasant surprise

It came as no surprise when the Third Front, not wanting to offer support to the presidential candidates of either the United Progressive Alliance or the National Democratic Alliance, sought to make a virtue of its predicament by proposing a second term for President Abdul Kalam. What did come as a surprise was Mr. Kalam's expressed willingness to be a candidate provided there was "certainty" over his winning. For one thing, with so many worthy candidates available to be picked out of the nation's diverse groups for an office high on symbolism, the convention against a second term has taken firm roots in Indian political practice. For another, the two major formations had already announced their candidates and informed him of their stand. In seeking certainty, Mr. Kalam may well have set an impossible condition for his United National Progressive Alliance — as the Third Front has now been christened — proposers to meet, but that did not stop them from trying to sell the idea to the UPA and the NDA. While the UPA, which together with the Left and the Bahujan Samaj Party has the numbers in the electoral college to see its candidate through comfortably, rejected the proposition right away, the NDA offered conditional support, expecting the UNPA to reciprocate its gesture and support Mr. Shekhawat if Mr. Kalam decided not to contest. A contest for the presidency is an entirely legitimate democratic exercise but the milieu and the unlikely prospect of winning were hardly conducive for an incumbent President to enter the ring.

Succumbing to an end-of-term President's natural yearning for a second term — there have been one or two honourable exceptions — seemed out of character with Mr. Kalam's public persona. With his background as an innovative technologist who was eminently successful in the management of high technology in defence, he brought a refreshingly new approach to the presidency. Casting away the ceremonial appurtenances that kept the public at a distance, he reached out to diverse groups including students, farmers, scientists, and women and established an instant rapport with them. His contributions to the public discourse in such areas as education, scientific research, and rural development have been of great value. If he was more popular with the public at large than with the political class, in his constitutional role he was not put to a major test. His going along — in keeping with his constitutional mandate — with the UPA government's blatantly partisan act of dissolving the Bihar Assembly that was later held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, no doubt disappointed some. He sought to compensate by a display of unwarranted activism when he sent back the Office of Profit bill passed by a broad consensus, only to be overruled by Parliament. Overall, his has been a creditable record in office, one that would have shone brighter had he walked away with grace and not sought to stay on in Rashtrapati Bhavan.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to postal address and

UNPA's proposal

If the UNPA wanted to give President Abdul Kalam a second term in office, it should have started the campaign in his favour before the UPA and the NDA declared their presidential candidates. As for Mr. Kalam, he should not even have considered the proposal for a second term.

C.H. Abdul Majeed,
Aluva

It is unfortunate that Mr. Kalam allowed himself to be dragged into an unsavoury controversy. He should not have heeded the counsel of the club of former Chief Ministers that goes by the name of UNPA. He should have sensed the impossibility of becoming President again.

G. David Milton,
Maruthancode

Mr. Kalam's willingness to contest the election if there was certainty of his victory was quite unexpected. Only a week ago, he termed the selection of Pratibha Patil, UPA's presidential candidate, 'fantastic.' The UNPA, I am sure, was banking on cross-voting.

But even if Mr. Kalam had won thanks to the effective floor management of the NDA and the UNPA, he could not have had a smooth term as the UPA had already expressed its discomfiture with his candidature.

T.V. Unnikrishnan,
Palakkad

Mr. Kalam's reported statement that he was ready for a second term came at an inopportune time. The Left had already clarified that it would not support him. The Congress had declared its candidate. Mr. Kalam should have indicated his willingness when there was still time or quit gracefully. His change of heart was most unexpected.

Ramesh Krishnan.

A few months ago, Mr. Kalam himself declared that he would not run for the second term. What happened all of a sudden? Did the so-called Third Front persuade him so forcefully? It is clear that the Front is trying to make a puppet show out of the election.

Vaibhav C. Ghalme,
New Delhi

The Third Front, a group of former Chief Ministers, is desperately trying to revive its sagging image. The presidential election has come in handy for it.

M. Chalam,
Hyderabad

It is unfortunate that Mr. Kalam fell for the UNPA's offer, which eroded the credibility of the presidential election more than ever before. It would have been more appropriate for him to stick to his earlier stand of not contesting for a second term. The chair he occupies is not meant for people of his kind because it has also been politicised.

K. Krithikanand,
Bangalore

By persuading Mr. Kalam to throw his hat into the ring "if there is certainty," the Third Front succeeded in politicising the office of President. It would have been better for Mr. Kalam to have maintained his original position that he would not contest.

S. Kamat,
Bardez

Unfortunate

The statement of Nationalist Congress Party leader Sharad Pawar that the game was over for Mr. Kalam was rather unfortunate. Mr. Kalam is still the President and such remarks are an insult to the highest constitutional office.

Arijit Ghose,
Chennai

The statements made by Mr. Pawar and RJD leader [illegible]

run for President again are unwarranted and in poor taste. Mr. Kalam had indicated long ago that he would get back to the teaching profession after his term came to an end. Only on the UNPA's persuasion, he expressed his willingness to be a candidate for a second term The two leaders would do well to remember that if the presidential elections had been direct, Mr. Kalam would have emerged victorious.

V.R. Ravikumar,
Chennai

NDA exposed

The NDA must be rueing its fate. To begin with, its decision to back Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat as an independent candidate was sound. When the UPA selected Ms. Patil, it had two options — to accept her candidature, which would have served the cause of consensus that Atal Bihari Vajpayee was in search of, or continue supporting Mr. Shekhawat and force an election. Tragedy struck the NDA when it fell hook, line and sinker for the carrot dangled by the UNPA. It stands totally exposed and discredited in the eyes of the people. Nobody will shed a tear if Mr. Shekhawat loses by a huge margin.

V.R. Janardhanam,
Chennai

CARTOONSCAPE



Why are child malnutrition levels not improving?

A.K. Shiva Kumar

India's tardy performance can be traced to the limited progress in providing basic health care.

According to the recently released National Family Health Survey-3 for 2005-06, 46 per cent of children below the age of three are underweight — down from 47 per cent in 1998-99. It is disappointing that despite the acceleration in economic growth and the country's economic buoyancy, there has been only a one percentage point reduction in the proportion of underweight children at the end of seven years. NFHS-3 offers insights into some of the factors that account for the abysmal progress in reducing child malnutrition.

One, improvements in expanding the reach and coverage of public health services over the past seven years have been very limited. For instance, only 44 per cent of children aged 12 to 23 months were fully immunised in 2005-06 — up from 42 per cent in 1998-99 and 36 per cent in 1998-99. As a matter of fact, immunisation coverage in urban areas has slipped from 61 per cent in 1998-99 to 58 per cent in 2005-06 and has increased only slightly in rural areas from 37 per cent to 39 per cent. The proportion of fully immunised children has declined during this period, surprisingly, in eight States — Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu — generally regarded as better performing in health and economically more prosperous.

Two, access to critical components of treatment of childhood diseases has deteriorated over the past seven years. For instance, the proportion of children with diarrhoea who received oral rehydration salts (ORS) in the two weeks preceding the NFHS-3 survey had risen from 18 per cent in 1992-93 to 27 per cent in 1998-99; but since fell to 26 per cent in 2005-06.

Three, critical public health messages are simply not reaching families with children. Public health experts, for instance, have for long emphasised the importance of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of a baby's life. Despite this, in 2005-06, only 23 per cent of infants up to five months old were exclusively breastfed — up from 16 per cent in 1998-99, an increase of seven percentage points over seven years.

Four, levels of child malnutrition are closely linked to the care women receive during pregnancy and thereafter. NFHS-3 reveals very little progress in women's access to maternal health services. Between 1998-99 and 2005-06, the proportion of births assisted by a doctor, nurse, woman health worker, auxiliary nurse midwife or other health personnel went up marginally from 42 to 48 per cent; and institutional births went up from 36 to 41 per cent over the same period.

Finally, closely linked to the health and nutritional status of children is the health of mothers. In 1998-99, 36 per cent of married women aged 15 to 49 had a Body Mass Index (BMI) below normal. The proportion fell marginally to 33 per cent in 2005-06. Levels of anaemia, high in 1998-99, have risen further to 56 per cent among married women and to 58 per cent among pregnant women.

Some States have done better than others in terms of reducing child malnutrition. And there are lessons to be learned from the better performing States. For instance, between 1998-99 and 2005-06, Maharashtra, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Chhattisgarh recorded the maximum reductions in child malnutrition. At the other extreme are Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana where the proportion of underweight children has, in fact, gone up. What can explain the differential performance of these two sets of States?

Initial conditions in terms of levels of malnutrition, socioeconomic development, and poverty do not seem to influence performance over time. For example, we find both low and high levels of child malnutrition among States that have done well to reduce child malnutrition and those that haven't. Included in the set of 'good' performers are Jammu and Kashmir (29 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (36 per cent), Maharashtra (40 per cent), and Orissa (44 per cent) with lower-than-national-average levels of child malnutrition as well as Chhattisgarh (52 per cent) with a higher-than-national-average percentage of underweight children. Similarly, included in the set of 'poor' performers are States with lower-than-national-average levels of child malnutrition — Assam (40 per cent) and Haryana (42 per cent) — as well as States with higher-than-national-average proportions of underweight children — Bihar (58 per cent), Jharkhand (59 per cent), and Madhya Pradesh (60 per cent).

Again, initial levels of income do not seem to matter when it comes to performance in reducing child malnutrition. There are relatively low and high income States among both 'better' and 'poor' performers. Maharashtra, a rich State, features among the top five performers and Haryana, another rich State, features among the poor performers. And among the 'good' performers is Orissa — a relatively low income State. Levels of female literacy do not also show any discernible pattern. In the set of 'good' performers are Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, and Chhattisgarh where female literacy levels are lower than the national average. And among the 'poor' performers are Assam and Haryana where female literacy rates are higher than the national average. Once again, we find that among the 'good' performers are States with relatively high levels of infant mortality (Chhattisgarh and Orissa). Similarly, also included in the set of poor performers are Haryana and Assam — States with relatively low levels of infant mortality.

Economic growth rates and efforts at reducing income poverty are also not associated with reductions in child malnutrition in any predictable manner. For example, growth rates in per capita income between 1998-99 and 2003-04 varied between 1.7 and 4.1 per cent in the set of 'good' performers; and between 1.7 and 4.9 per cent in the set of 'poor' performers. Similarly, the association between reductions in child malnutrition and poverty levels is not obvious. Between 1999 and 2005, with the exception of Haryana where it has gone up, the headcount poverty ratio has decreased in both sets of States. In the category of poor performers are States that show a relatively large decline in the proportion of poor, namely Assam and Bihar.

Some explanations for differential performance in reducing child malnutrition can be found by examining trends in health provisioning, improvements in child care, and health status of women between 1998-99 and 2005-06 across the two sets of States. Women's nutritional status has shown greater improvements in States where child malnutrition has come down than among poorly performing States. Similarly, we find that child care practices show greater improvement in the better performing States than in the poorly performing States. For instance, the proportion of children under the age of three breastfed within one hour of birth has shown larger improvements in the five 'good' performing States. Similarly, the better performing States show greater improvements in the reach of public health services. For example, the percentage of children with diarrhoea who received ORS has shown improvement in four of the five 'good' performers (the exception being Jammu and Kashmir) whereas it has shown a decline in four of the five poorly performing States. In short, effectiveness in reducing child malnutrition seems to be closely linked to improvements in access to, and reach of, health services, care of children, and the nutritional status of mothers.

To conclude, NFHS-3 reveals that progress in lowering levels of child malnutrition over the past seven years has been extremely poor. There is nevertheless much to learn from the differential performance of Indian States in terms of what it takes to reduce levels of child malnutrition. Success in reducing malnutrition is not so obviously dependent upon initial conditions in terms of a State's levels of child malnutrition, infant survival, socioeconomic development, poverty, and even female literacy. At the same time, progress in reducing child malnutrition does not seem to depend so much on economic growth rates or efforts at reducing income poverty.

Effectiveness in reducing child malnutrition is, among other factors, closely linked to improvements in access to, and reach of, health services, care of children, and nutritional status of women.

NFHS-3 reveals that India's extremely tardy performance in terms of reducing child malnutrition can be traced to the limited progress in the provisioning of basic health care. It is particularly important to focus on improving infant feeding and caring practices as well as the nutritional well-being of mothers. The latter is critical if the inter-generational transfer of malnutrition from the mother to the child — captured in the high proportion of low birthweight babies — is to be checked. The nutritional well-being of newborn babies and children under the age of three deserves the topmost attention. It is not enough to talk about the demographic advantage that India enjoys; the real challenge lies in ensuring that the young in India do enjoy improved nutritional and other facilities.

"IAEA might not cope in atomic crisis"

Nuclear watchdog is under-funded and no longer has reliable equipment to detect covert nuclear activity, claims Mohamed ElBaradei.

Julian Borger

The head of the world's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has warned that the organisation is so under-funded that it would have difficulty responding to a nuclear accident.

In an unusual appeal, Mohamed ElBaradei also claimed that the IAEA no longer had reliable equipment to detect covert nuclear activity, nor did it have consistent funding for its efforts to combat nuclear smuggling. Dr. ElBaradei made his remarks to the IAEA's board of governors, delegates from national governments, on June 15 but the comments were only made public on Thursday. "If an accident were to happen tomorrow, we would be hard pressed to carry out core functions. This is a reality," he said.

In the event of an accident such as the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, the IAEA's incident and emergency centre is supposed to step in immediately, sending technicians to help to limit the spread of radiation, advise on the treatment of casualties, and coordinate the international response.

Dr. ElBaradei said the IAEA's "safeguards function is being eroded over time," noting that the organisation was using an unreliable 28-year-old instrument to carry out environmental sampling. That sampling is carried out in and around countries such as Iran and North Korea, where covert nuclear programmes are suspected. The results often have a decisive influence on United Nations decisions to impose sanctions or other measures.

Because the agency did not have proper equipment of its own, Dr. ElBaradei said, it would have to rely on external laboratories in other countries, which "puts into question the whole independence of the agency's verification system."

"In the nuclear security area, where every world leader is saying that is a number-one priority, we continue to rely for 90 per cent of our security funding on extra budgetary contributions that are heavily conditioned and highly unpredictable."

IAEA officials say the organisation has more and more work to do trying to keep up with international demands to monitor nuclear proliferation, while its budget has been frozen on the insistence of some rich states.

"The budget is essentially a political statement," Dr. ElBaradei said. "What kind of agency do you want to have? You can have a mediocre agency, or you can have an effective and efficient agency."

His comments come at a time when the world community is struggling to handle proliferation crises over Iran and North Korea, which are defying pressure to halt nuclear programmes.

While Iran has so far refused to contemplate a deal that would infringe its right to enrich uranium, North Korea agreed in February to take steps to dismantle its nuclear programme in return for international assistance. But implementation of that deal has stalled since then because of a row over cash. A U.S. negotiator, Christopher Hill, visited North Korea on Thursday, the first visit by a senior American official in nearly five years, in an attempt to speed up progress.

However, North Korea on Thursday cast doubts over a planned visit by U.N. nuclear inspectors next week and its earlier pledge to seal its nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, the source of its weapons-grade plutonium. — **©Guardian Newspapers Limited London 2007**

Cong. MP held, freed on bail

The Times of India News Service

MADRAS, February 14: The Congress MP from Coimbatore, Mr C.K. Kuppuswamy, who opened fire on Saturday to scare away an armed mob which allegedly tried to kill him was arrested yesterday from his residence in Tirupur and later released on bail.

The firing incident occurred when Mr Kuppuswamy went to a pocket of his constituency to enquire into the welfare of about a thousand families evicted from the area a few days back by the municipal corporation for alleged encroachment of land. When the MP criticised the chief minister, it reportedly resulted in some AIADMK men arriving on the scene with knives and sickles and allegedly trying to attack him. In self-defence, the MP said in the complaint given to the police, he fired two rounds in the air.

Rs 760-cr German aid to India

(Continued from Page 1)

able to the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to finance a programme for the promotion of rural small-scale business and a loan of DM 60 million to meet foreign exchange costs resulting from the purchase of fertilisers from Germany.

Other schemes covering the loan components include a loan of DM 60 million to be used to co-finance a financial sector-related adjustment programme and a loan of DM 15.20 million to the SIDBI for its lending schemes to small scale industries.

Grant amount of DM 150 million covers a financial grant of DM 20 million for a primary health project in Maharashtra, a financial grant of DM 15 million for a social marketing plan, a financial grant of DM 35 million for a low-cost house-building programmes for lower income groups (HUDCO), a financial grant of DM 55 million for the expansion of project rural water supply in Rajasthan and a financial grant of DM 25 million for the expansion of the erosion control project in Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, Dr Manmohan Singh told Dr Spranger that India will adopt a step by step approach in implementing the reform process to ensure that it is durable.

Dr Spranger among other subjects discussed issues relating to bilateral aid policy and foreign investment in infrastructure areas like power. He said the National Renewal Fund programme was identified as an important element of the reform process.

The German minister expressed satisfaction at the signing of the Indo-German financial cooperation protocol through which Rs 760 crores will flow to India and indicated that a new dimension to Indo-German co-operation had been added in recent years with active partnership at various levels.

Dr Spranger said, besides giving aid, Germany was willing to assist India in various areas during the implementation of economic reforms.

Battle tank: Dr Spranger, said that his country would soon be taking a decision on supplying engines for the India's main battle tank (MBT) "Arjun" reports TOINS.

Addressing a news conference here today, Dr Spranger said that there was an intense debate in Germany on supplying engines for India's MBT and went on to reveal that the issue had figured in discussions during the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao's recent visit to Germany.

"A decision on the issue will be taken soon," he said. When asked how soon, Dr Spranger replied, "I don't think you will have to wait long".

The "Arjun" will be required to be powered by the German MTU 1400 HP diesel engines till such time when India develops an indigenous engine for which efforts are continuing. Following successful conclusion of the static and dynamic trials that were witnessed by the former defence minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, at the Mahajan Ranges exactly a year ago, six of this state-of-the-art MBT was formally inducted into the Indian army on June 14 last year.

Foundation stone of Jain temple laid

The Times of India News Service

NOIDA, February 14: The Bhoomi pujan and foundation stone laying ceremony of the Digambar Jain mandir was performed yesterday in Sector ... where the Jain Samaj, Noida has been allotted 1,500 sqr mt ... The Jain muni, Shri 108 ... Nandji Muni performed the ceremony. Mr Ashok Jain ... of *The Times of India* group ... publications presided over the function, at which Mr ... Jhakar, Union agriculture minister was the chief guest.

Expressing his anguish at what was happening in the name of religion, Mr Jhakar said, all human beings were one and there was need for following the teachings in the right spirit of Mahavira. He lauded the preachings of Lord Mahavir by Vidya Nandji Muni.

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ISSUE OPENS ON FEBRUARY 23, 1994

RISK FACTORS

- Creation of additional capacity may lead to competition, as is normal in any business.
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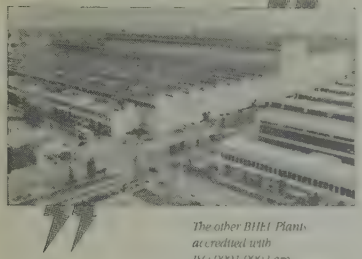
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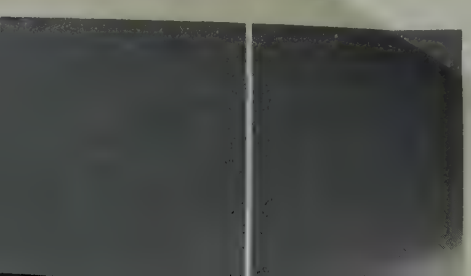
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TOI
15/2/94

THE TIMES OF INDIA

A Thought for Today

Let no one charge me with ever having abused or encouraged weakness or surrendered on matters of principle.
— MAHATMA GANDHI.

Japanese No

The Japanese have unique ways of conducting economic diplomacy. When the Uruguay Round of GATT was concluded and Japan had to make substantial trade concessions, including opening up its rice market to the West, the Prime Minister, Mr Morihiro Hosokawa, had no hesitation in apologising to the nation for his "government's inability to protect self-sufficiency in rice". At the same time, Japan accepted the GATT order which includes the multilateral World Trade Organisation (WTO). Now, when the United States is threatening Japan with unilateral sanctions because the latter's economic policies do not suit the sole surviving superpower, Mr Hosokawa says he will appeal to the WTO as a victim of American intransigence. The adroitness implicit in this is, however, not the only noteworthy aspect of the failure of the U.S.-Japan summit-level trade talks. What is of greater significance is that this is perhaps the first sign of Japan gathering the courage to say "no" to the U.S. whose hegemony it has accepted ever since its defeat in World War II. Indeed, despite Japan's growing economic strength, it has continued to see the U.S. as a patron and protector and, although it has often been irked by demands made unilaterally by the U.S., it has generally tended to be accommodative rather than confrontationist. Even now, notwithstanding reports regarding the beginning of "a cooling off period" between Japan and the U.S., there is reason to believe that there is more symbolic posturing than substantial differences between the two.

It is also clear that both Mr Bill Clinton and Mr Hosokawa are playing to domestic political galleries rather than engaging in a meaningful dialogue. In fact, it is this need to be sensitive to domestic opinion regardless of what may be the attitude of the other party which is the new element in Tokyo- Washington relations. As far as Japan is concerned, its politics recently crossed a watershed with the seemingly perennial Liberal Democratic Party, which unabashedly accepted American overlordship, being voted out of power. The present coalition politics is addressed as much to electoral and other reforms as to finding an international role for Japan commensurate with its economic strength. In this respect, Japan has come of age and is ready to operate on the global scene as a confident world power which uses its own unique definitions of nationhood and national interest. As such, it will surprise no one if the tensions between the economic superpower — Japan — and the military superpower — the U.S. — deteriorate over time. Indeed, Japan is increasingly orienting itself towards Asia as the U.S. is consolidating its position on the American continent through moves like NAFTA. Such developments may provide the basis of a new international scenario which will be of no little interest to countries like India.

Cleaning Up Cities

With Bombay being projected as the international finance centre of the country, a great deal more will have to be done to clean it up, both on the ground and in the atmosphere. Fortunately, the World Bank has been assisting it under its metropolitan environment improvement programme and many of the consultants' recommendations, the final report of which has been presented this week, have significant lessons for other cities in a country which has the world's largest urban population. One of the main findings is that, contrary to popular perception, several city services are heavily subsidised and prices often tend to favour the rich. This echoes what USAID has observed in relation to the provision of water in cities here, that those fortunate enough to obtain it from a tap bear a fraction of what slum-dwellers pay, volume for volume. Everywhere, solid waste management is by far one of of the most intractable urban problems. The Bank's consultants have estimated that it costs an average of Rs 86 per citizen annually to collect Bombay's 4,000 tonnes every day and it would be interesting to find out which "producers," including factories and hotels, are bearing their share of this burden. Indeed, as a whole, environment-related services — such as water supply, sewerage, street cleaning and conservancy — cost the metropolis Rs 663 crores or about Rs 450 a year per head. If one added the capital expenditure on these items, the cost would rise to Rs 650 per head.

No efficiently-run metropolis can continue to pick up the bills on such services. Every municipal corporation will, therefore, have to improve its management by obtaining accurate data on all aspects of the environment and seek to make polluters pay. In every city, solid wastes are being dumped without any sanitary landfill treatment or maintenance of inventories. As Bombay is already witnessing, dumping sites are becoming fewer and the situation will only go from bad to worse early in the next century. Some innovative strategies are called for. One is to make the householder more conscious of the problem and persuade him to separate the organic or kitchen waste from paper, plastic and the rest. A co-operative housing society can then enlist the services of a ragpicker in the neighbourhood to collect these separate bags, which will be in their mutual interest. Such a system will cut down [illegible]

No More Utopias

A Talk With Vaclav Havel

By DILEEP PADGAONKAR

IN early 1970 my wife and I travelled to Soviet-occupied Prague armed with letters of introduction given to me in Paris for Alexander Dubcek and Vaclav Havel. Dubcek, the leader of the Prague spring, had been ousted after the Soviet armed intervention in August 1968 and held under house arrest. Havel, who had earned a reputation as a fine playwright known for wielding irony with much finesse, had begun to face the wrath of the authorities.

Prague was cold, damp and gloomy. There was no palpable tension in the air but you sensed the mood of the people in the streets, bars and near-empty shops: apathetic on the surface, bitter under their breath. I had been given detailed directions to a house where I was to hand over the letters to an intermediary who would later arrange the interviews. We boarded a tram, alighted at the indicated stop half an hour later and proceeded towards the address when, quite abruptly, we knew that we were being tailed. We then changed course, wandered into the bylanes, stopped to admire a statue here, a fine building there, exchanged loud pleasantries in Marathi, sat down on a bench in a park. Throughout, our companions in trench-coats pointedly made us aware of their presence. There was nothing else to do other than to take the tram back to our lodgings — a huge beer barrel converted into a mini-shack — in the dim hope that we would meet Dubcek and Havel on some other occasion.

Sunny Look

In the autumn of 1991 I travelled to Prague a second time to attend a UNESCO-sponsored conference on culture. The city now wore a sunny and cheerful look. The apathy of the people had lifted. The bitterness was nowhere in evidence. Democracy and capitalism had brought other issues to the fore: inflation, unemployment, a growing incidence of crime, fears about the future of the Czechoslovak republic. But the overall mood was relaxed and self-assured.

Meanwhile, the man I had missed meeting 19 years earlier had followed an altogether striking trajectory: he had been imprisoned, he was one of the co-signatories of Charter 77 (the first open and collective defiance of the communist regime) which had matured into the Civic Forum, the loose organisation of several anti-dogmatic forces responsible for bringing about the velvet revolution and the end of the communist rule, and was now the tenant of the castle, the Presidential residence. I was introduced to him at a reception he hosted for the conference delegates and we had time enough to shake hands and engage in small talk — it included a passing reference to Mahatma Gandhi — which was all but drowned by the echoes of clinking glasses and plates and conversations reverbating in the chandeliered banquet hall.

Not Sure

In the annexe of Vigyan Bhavan in Delhi last week I finally managed to talk to Vaclav Havel at some length. It was not an entirely relaxed conversation because we were surrounded by Czech and Indian officials and armed security guards and that too in an open lounge behind the conference hall. But Havel feigned to ignore their presence. He had just emerged from a press conference and I suggested to him that the questions that needed to be asked had perhaps all been exhausted. "I am not quite sure of that," he said. "Some of the subjects which were raised could be developed at much greater length". That left the door ajar for me to pass through.

I reminded him of what he had written several years ago "I sow a lot of trouble but aspire for a lot of calm". Today in Europe I told him this is precisely what seems to be happening though the trouble that some people [illegible] wing has [illegible] alarming ring to it. Did he agree? Not quite. "In Europe," Havel said, "the problem is not as if the continent is divided in such a manner that calm prevails in one half and chaos in another. The problem is that for decades Europe was accustomed to living under a certain arrangement. The iron curtain divided the continent in two halves. Different patterns of life developed and certain hierarchies and values were established in those two halves. At present Europe's major challenge is to develop patterns of co-operation and to build common structures. It now appears that neither half has been sufficiently prepared to cope with this challenge.

New Factor

"The difficulties existing in the post-communist world have a variety of causes — historical, psychological, social — but apart from these difficulties we have to contend with an entirely new factor: the West no longer has a common enemy. We witness the emergence of diversified interests in different countries. Therefore the challenge to build a new European order is a challenge for everyone".

I told the President that, in ordinary conversations with people in both parts of Europe, the one sinister sentence one frequently hears is: "the good old days". I said I do not understand what kind of good old days people are yearning for. And I added that I am concerned about the fact that many of those who came to power in the wake of the collapse of communism have not been tolerant enough of dissenting opinion. Is this bitter irony true?, I asked. And is there a countervailing trend against it?

"Phenomena such as nationalism, xenophobia, intolerance and chauvinism are to some extent understandable as they are concomitant to the process of major changes now underway," he said. " I can cite the example of one country where the dictatorial regime fell and the crime rate rose sharply. In a situation like that people said: 'Oh, in the good old times order prevailed'. Of course, it is necessary to combat such phenomena in a vigorous manner. It is necessary to understand their causes and to then eliminate them and build up those things which open up positive prospects".

People Concerned

Thinking people everywhere, I told the President, are concerned about the fate of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nation-states. His own country had split into two.How does one prevent polarisation along ethnic, nationalist and religious lines?

"There are many ways of building co-existence," Havel said. "One way is to pursue a reasonable course of decentralisation. But even more important than that is to build a civil society which respects cultural differences and at the same time allows citizens to work together on a civil basis both within a nation and across states. Democracy is vital in this regard. For the less democracy you have the greater is the risk that nationalism and such other phenomena will cause problems and conflicts".

But civil society, I said, is being increasingly dictated to by the banker and the bigot, the manager and the mullah or the mahant. Did he agree? "Generally," Havel said, "civil society does not elevate any particular layer of identity above the others. On the other hand the fanatics choose one layer — religious, national or any other — and elevate it above the rest and make it sacrosanct. They then feel that they are surrounded by enemies. A civil society respects all strata of human identity. It allows all religions to co-exist. After all, at the roots, you find universal concepts of mutual respect in all religions. The fundamentalists actually distort the original concepts of religion".

I recalled that in a speech in Davos last year he had emphasised the need for the politician to become a person again.But politics, I said, had become a soulless profession. The politician is responsive to his ratings in opinion polls. He is bothered about his exposure on television.He thinks in terms of vote banks and parliamentary intrigues. The person in him appears to have disappeared. "This relates to the development of modern civilisation," Havel said. "Increasingly it has created sophisticated technological systems. These have dehumanised politics. It is necessary to look for ways of reintroducing the personal element into politics again.Among the many possibilities of doing this one surely must relate to the electoral system. Decentralisation of power may be another. A situation must be created where the personal contact between citizens and representatives is not lost".

Mere Consumers

Is it possible, I asked the President, to have any kind of utopia today? Is there some romance left in the public domain? Or are we condemned to be mere consumers of goods and services? "It is not difficult to devise an overall concept for a new world arrangement," he said. "But this is precisely a way which has not proved to be right in the course of history. This kind of utopianism has failed to be effective. The world does not need a new project of an ideal arrangement. It does not need a new political ideology. But it certainly needs ideas to enhance the spiritual element in public life. The enrichment of life with ideas has to be a continuous concern and not the search for an all-compassing concept which the population is expected to identify itself with".

I reminded the President of the brief remark he had made to me about his admiration for Mahatma Gandhi during our previous encounter in Prague. I told him that, despite the ritualist references to him in official statements, the Mahatma was a memory in India and not a living force. But I added that when dark doubts trouble us we Indians tend to refer to the Mahatma again and again.Did the President think that Gandhiji was likely to be valid in the century which is about to dawn?

"I think that those who want to do so can find inspiration and wisdom in Gandhi's work even now," Havel said. " He understood well what dehumanisation in politics meant.And mind you, Gandhi did not need TV. Through the strength of his personality he was able to change things for the better to stop conflicts. This was possible because he invested his entire being, all his fate for the sake of a public cause. Anyone willing to make that sort of an investment bordering on sacrifice might be able to change things for the better even now. Is not that an inspiring message?"

Mahatma's Message

That President Vaclav Havel himself heeds the Mahatma's message would be plain from the harsh criticism directed at him by his detractors on the left and the right. The ideologues on the left accuse him of kowtowing to the dictates of Western, and especially American, capitalism; the bigots of the right denounce him for failing to respond to the urges of "nationalism". But Havel carries on regardless attempting to inject morality in public life, encouraging ideas, creativity and humour in public spaces and aesthetics into "everything".

When our conversation ended Havel who had tip-toed into my imaginary world a quarter of a century ago got up, tightened the knot of his tie and, surrounded by a posse of policemen and officials, walked in a "presidential" manner towards his limousine. But even then he wore an awkward and diffident look as if to say: "See, all this pomp and ceremony are a passing show. I remain a Czech bumpkin at heart who still has nightmares about the midnight knock"...

LETTERS

Muslim Patriots

Sir, [illegible] *parivar* was busy these days [illegible] ing a rally against mult[illegible] New Delhi on April 6, [illegible] that educating "educated illiterates" now scales higher in its list of priorities ("VHP to teach "educated illiterates", February 1)

The first lesson of this literacy campaign was lectured by Mr Ashok Singhal in Bombay. He said that Hindu-Muslim unity is not needed and "not a single Muslim would be left in India as muscle power was going to be the only alternative in politics in the coming years."

Mr Singhal, also released a textbook, *Threat of Islam* which says that Muslims never participated in the freedom movement. I am afraid, it was Veer Savarkar who had described Bahadur Shah Zafar as India's first national leader who led India's first war of independence in 1857. The textbook claims to be a review of the events from 1857-1993

I will confine myself by naming just a dozen Muslim patriots who played a glorious role in the freedom struggle: Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Ishfaque Ullah Khan, Shaukat Usmani, Hasrat Muhani, Shahnawaz Khan, Baluchi Gandhi, Abdul Samad Khan and G.M. Syed of Sindh. Netaji Subhash Bose had a Muslim as his chief recruiting officer for the INA and Muslims constituted 40 per cent of INA's soldiers. The list of Muslim patriots is too long. However I am sure Mr Singhal himself never played any role in the freedom struggle nor can he give us just one name from the *sangh parivar* who played any role in the freedom struggle during British period between 1931 and 1947. It is interesting that Mr L.K. Advani joined RSS in 1942, at a time when the whole country was engaged in the Quit India movement against the British

The reason for the *parivar's* absolute blank record for participation in the freedom struggle is simple The Hindu Mahasabha and RSS (along with the Muslim League) were proped up by the British to serve their imperial interests. Guru Golwalkar, in his book, *Bunch of Thoughts*, accused the freedom fighters (i.e. Congressmen, etc) for reducing the entire freedom movement to virtually anti-British movement. He wrote: "Being anti-British was equated with patriotism and nationalism. This *reactionary view* has had disastrous effects upon the entire course of the independence struggle, its leaders and the common people."

Hindutva served British imperialism before independence and today it is serving U.S. imperialism by raising the bogey of "Threat of Islam". With the disappearance of the Soviet threat, U.S. imperialism has now invented Islam as a new "threat" to justify its imperialist designs. The *parivar*, in effect, is paving the ground for civil war in the country and create a situation similar to Afghanistan

Bombay. LAJPAT RAI

Up In Arms

Sir, — The incident of indiscipline by army personnel in Hyderabad surely did not merit an edit, "Matter Of Shame" (February 5). Authorised to carry weapons of destruction soldiers are naturally expected to practise higher standards of behaviour and behave responsibly, which they are normally known to do. Indeed, they have earned praise for their restraint, internationally. The news itself needed accurate coverage in the absence of which, your readers in the city have got the impression that the army committed a horrible crime in Hyderabad

The provocation must have been serious enough and the extraordinary comradeship that exists among soldiers might have led to col[illegible] action of the kind. Not that the a[illegible] should be condoned, but the publ[illegible] should be given a more balanced version of the event

ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬು ಮುರಿಯುವ ಕೆಲಸ...

ರೈತರು ದೇಶದ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬು ಆ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲು ಬನ್ನೇ ಮುರಿಯುವ ಘನ ಸರಕಾರ 'ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆ - 2004'ರ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾಡಹೊರಟಿದೆ. ವಿಶ್ವ [illegible] ಸದಸ್ಯರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ಎರಡುಪಟ್ಟು ಜನರನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಸರಕಾರ ಜಾರಿಗೆ ತರಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿರುವ ಕಾನೂನುಗಳು ನಮ್ಮ ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಎಂಥ ಹೆಬ್ಬು ಆಘಾತಕಾರಿ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಲು ಈ ಕರಡು ಕಾಯಿದೆಯ ಹೊಸ ರೂಪ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿರುವ ಸಂಸತ್ತಿನ ಮುಂದಿರುವ ಕರಡು ಕಾಯಿದೆಯ ಕೆಲವು ಅಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿದರೆ ಸಾಕು. ಇದು ಬೌದ್ಧಿಕ ಆಸ್ತಿ ಹಕ್ಕುಗಳ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣೆಯ ಸಂಬಂಧಿ, ವಂಶವಾಹಿ ಮಾರ್ಪಾಡಿಸಿದ ಬೀಜಗಳು ಪೇಟೆಂಟ್ ಕಾನೂನಿಗೆ ಒಳಪಡುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ರೈತರ ಬೀಜಗಳ ಹಕ್ಕಿನ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತನಾಡುವ ಹೊಸ ರೂಪ ಪಡೆಯಲಿರುವ ಕಾಯಿದೆಯ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಹಕ್ಕಿನ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡುವ ಅವಕಾಶವಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅವರು ಹೊಸ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಲು ಕೈಹಾಕದ ಕಾನೂನು ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆಯಾಗುವಂತೆ ಅವನ್ನು ಕಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಹುನ್ನಾರ.

ನಮ್ಮ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಉತ್ತಮ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ದೊರಕಿಸಿಕೊಡುವುದೇ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಉದ್ದೇಶ ಎಂಬ ಸೋಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊರಬಂದ ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆ - 2004'ರ ಕರಡು ಪ್ರತಿ ಇಡೀ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಬೀಜೋದ್ಯಮಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳ ಹಿತಾಸಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡುವ ಹುನ್ನಾರ ಎಂಬುದು ಯಾರ ಬಳಿಕವೂ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಕಾಯಿದೆಯಿಂದ ಯಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ? ನಮ್ಮ ರೈತರಿಗಾಗಿಯೋ ಅಥವಾ ಬಡ ಜನರ ತುತ್ತು ಕಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಬಹುರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೋ ? ಕಾರಣ ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆ ವಿದೇಶೀ ಬೀಜ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳನ್ನು, ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ನೇರ ಮಾತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದರರ್ಥವೇನು ? ನಮ್ಮ ರೈತ ತನ್ನ ಬೀಜ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು, ಬೀಜಗಳ ಕುರಿತಾದ ಜ್ಞಾನಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ಬದಿಗಿಟ್ಟು ವಿದೇಶೀ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳು ಮಾರುವ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಳ್ಳಲಿ, ಆ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳು ಉದ್ಧಾರವಾಗಲಿ ಎಂದರ್ಥವಲ್ಲವೆ ?

ಭಾರತವಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರೇ ಬೀಜ ಸಂಪತ್ತಿನ ಒಡೆಯರು. ಬೀಜಗಳ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ಕುರಿತು ರೈತರ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆ ತಲೆತಲಾಂತರದಿಂದ ಬಂದ ಜ್ಞಾನವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಇದು ಯಾವ ಸಂಪತ್ತಿಗೂ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಿಲ್ಲ. ಬೀಜಗಳ ವಿನಿಮಯದ ಪದ್ಧತಿ ಜಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದಾಗಲೆ ಬೆಸೆಯಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿತ್ತು ಈ ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿರುವ ಮುಗ್ಧ ರೈತರನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಕಾನೂನೇ ಅವರ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಕತ್ತಿ ಮಸೆಯುವ ಧಾರ್ಷ್ಟ್ಯವಾಗಿ ತ್ತದೆ ಅಷ್ಟೆ. ಇದರಿಂದಾಗಿ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಬೀಜ, ಸ್ವಯ ಸಂಕುಲಗಳು ಕಳೆದು ಹೋಗುವ ಆಪಾಯವೂ ಇಲ್ಲದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದಲ್ಲದೆ, ಬಹುಪಾಲು ರೈತರು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯ ಬೀಜ ವಿರೀದಿಸಲು ಮುಂದಾದರೆಂದರೆ ಬೀಜಗಳ ದರ ವಿರುವುದು ಖಂಡಿತ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಲಾಭ ಯಾರಿಗೆ ? ಬೀಜ ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡುವ ಖಾಸಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಬಹುರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೇ ಹೊರತು ರೈತರಿಗಲ್ಲ.

ಈ ಮಸೂದೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೀಜಗಳ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ನಿಖರತೆಗೆ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಕ್ರಮಗಳಿವೆ . ಆದರೆ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಉತ್ತಮವೆಲ್ಲದ ಬೀಜಗಳು ದೊರೆತು ಅವರ ಬೆಳೆಪೂರ್ತಿ ಹಾಳಾಯಿತೆಂದರೆ ಅವರಿಗಾಗುವ ನಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾರು ಹೊಣೆ ? ಆಗ ರೈತ ಗ್ರಾಹಕ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ದೂರು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಎನ್ನುತ್ತದೆ ಮಸೂದೆ. ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಹಿಡುವಳಿಗಳ ಬಡ ರೈತರು ಬೆಳೆ ನಷ್ಟವಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಕಟ್ಟೆ ಹತ್ತಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಸಿಗುವವರೆಗೆ ಕಾಯಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿದೆಯೇ ? ನಮ್ಮ ಗ್ರಾಹಕ ಕೋರ್ಟುಗಳು ರೈತರಿಗೆ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಒದಗಿಸುವಷ್ಟು ಸಮರ್ಥವಾಗಿವೆಯೇ ? ಹೀಗೆ ಮಸೂದೆಯ ಈ ಭಾಗ ಕೂಡ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿಯೇ ಇದೆ.

ಇನ್ನು ಬೀಜಗಳ ಆಮದು ಮತ್ತು ರಫ್ತಿಗೆ ಕೂಡ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಠಿಣ ಕ್ರಮಗಳಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದರಿಂದ 'ಜೈವಿಕ ಚೌರ್ಯ' ಅಥವಾ ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಹೊರದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಜೀವ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯದ ಸಾಗಾಟ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಬಹುದು. ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಬೇವು, ಆರಿಶಿಣ, ಬಾಸುಮತಿ ಅಕ್ಕಿಗಳನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮವೆಂದು ಪೇಟೆಂಟ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಹೊರಟಿದ್ದ ವಿದೇಶೀ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೆ 'ರೋಗಿ ಬಯಸಿದ್ದೂ ಹಾಲು ಅನ್ನ, ವೈದ್ಯ ನೀಡಿದ್ದೂ ಹಾಲು ಅನ್ನ' ಎಂಬಂತಾಗುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂದೇಹವಿಲ್ಲ.

ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆಯ ಕಿದ್ದುಪಡಿಯನ್ನು ಸರಕಾರ ಕೈಬಿಡುವಂತಾಗಬೇಕು. ಅಂದರೇನೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಬೀಜ ಸಾರ್ವಭೌಮತೆಯನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ. ನಮ್ಮ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ.

ರೈತ ಈ ದೇಶದ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬು. 'ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆ' ಈ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬನ್ನು ಮುರಿಯುವ ಗದಾಪ್ರಹಾರವಲ್ಲದೆ ಬೇರೇನಲ್ಲ.

ಬೀಜದ ಕುರಿತಾದ ಆತಿ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆ . ತಾವೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಬೀಜಗಳು ಆತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ವಾಗಿವೆಯೆಂದು ಶಿಫಾರಸು ಕೊಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಅವು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಗೆ ನುಗ್ಗಬಹುದು ನಮ್ಮ ನೆಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗೊಳಗಾಗದ [illegible] ಬೀಜಗಳು ಬಣ್ಣಬಣ್ಣದ ಆಶ್ವಾಸನೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ರೈತರ ಹೊಲಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಂದು ಬೀಳಲು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಮಯವೇನೂ ಬೇಕಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈಗಾಗಲೇ [illegible]ಂಟೋ ಕಂಪೆನಿಯ ಬಿಟ ಹತ್ತಿ ನಮ್ಮ ನೆಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದ ಅನಾಹುತಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದೇ ಇದೆ. ಆದರೂ ಮತ್ತೆ ಆಂತಹ [illegible]ದಿಷ್ಟು ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳನ್ನು ದೇಶದೊಳಕ್ಕೆ [illegible]ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ ಸರಕಾರ.

ವಿದೇಶೀ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪೆಡ [illegible]ಬ್ಬು ನೇರ ಆಹ್ವಾನ ನೀಡುವ ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನು ಕಲಮು 15 ಕೂಡ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಬೀಜಗಳು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸ ಬಹುದು. ಅವಕ್ಕೆ ಶರತ್ತೆಂದರೆ ಪರಿಸರ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಅನುಮತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿರಬೇಕು, ಅನುಮತಿ ದೊರೆಯುವುದು ಕಡಮಾಗಿ ವಂತಿದ್ದರೆ ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷಗಳ [illegible]ಯವರೆಗೆ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು. ಆಗಲೂ ಅನುಮತಿ ದೊರೆಯಲಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದಾದರೆ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಬೀಜ ಸಮಿತಿ ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಬಹುದು. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಡಕವಾಗಿರುವ ವಿಶೇಷವೇನೆಂದರೆ, ಪರಿಸರ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಅನುಮತಿ ನೀಡುವವರೆಗೆ ಕಾಯಬೇಕಿಂದಿಲ್ಲ. ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಬೀಜಗಳು ರೈತರ ಹೊಲಗದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು ಆಕ್ರಮಿಸಬಹುದು. ಮುಂದೆ ಪರಿಸರ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಈ ಬೀಜಗಳು ನಮ್ಮ ಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಆಗದೆಂದೋ ಅವನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಿದರೆ ನಷ್ಟ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದೋ ಅವನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಿದರೆ ನಷ್ಟವಾಗುವುದು ಯಾರಿಗೆ ? [illegible]ಂತರ

■ ಸರೋಜಾ ಪ ಕಾರ

ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ತನ್ನ ನೆಲದೊಳಗೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ಕೊಟ್ಟುನೆಂದರೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಬೇರೆ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸುವ ಹಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಆ ರೈತರ, ನೆಲದ ಗತಿ ವಿನಾಗಬೇಕು ? ಈ ಕಲಮು ಕುಲಾಂತರಿ ಬೀಜಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಥಾನ ದೊರಕಿಸಿ ಕೊಡುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವೇ ಹೊರತು ರೈತರ ಹಿತರಕ್ಷಣೆಯ ಕುರಿತಾದ ಕ್ರಮ ಅಲ್ಲವೇ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಐರೋಪ್ಯ ದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ [illegible]ವರ್ತಿತ ಬೆಳೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಜನರಿಂದ ಬಲವಾದ [illegible]ಳೀಧ ಬರುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಆ ಬೀಜಗಳಿಗೆ [illegible]ಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವಾಗತ ಎಂಥ ವಿಪರ್ಯಾಸ !

ಇನ್ನು ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆಯ ಅಂತಿಮ, ಆದರೆ ಅತಿ ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾದ ಹಾಗೂ ರೈತರ ಬೀಜ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಿಯುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಭಾಗವನ್ನು ನೋಡೋಣ. ತಮ್ಮ ತಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ವಿನಿಮಯ, ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯಿಲ್ಲ ಅವರ ಹಕ್ಕು ಹಾಗೇ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಬ್ರಾಂಡಿನಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡಬಾರದು. ಅಂದರೆ ರೈತರು ಬೇರೆ ಖಾಸಗಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿದೇಶೀ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳೊಡನೆ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆಗಿಳಿಯಬಾರದು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ರೈತರು ಬೀಜ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲೇ ಬೇಕು. ಪರಂಪರಾಗತವಾಗಿ ಬಂದ ತಿಳಿವಳಿಕೆಯ ಮುಂದೆ ಈ ಬೀಜ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಎಂಬ ಹೊಸ ಭೂತದ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯೆಂಟೇ? ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗೊಳಗಾಗದ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ವಿನಿಮಯ ಅಥವಾ ಮಾರಾಟಕ್ಕೆ ಬಳಸುವಂತಿಲ್ಲ! ಬೀಜ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಕರಿಗೆ ಸಂದೇಹವೇನಾದರೂ ಬಂದಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರ ಹೊಲ, ಗದ್ದೆ ಮನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಬೀಜಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕೊಳಿಸಬಹುದು. ಈ ಕಾನೂನಂತೂ ತೀರಾ ಅತಿರೇಕವಾಗಿ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಅಡುಗೆ ಮನೆಯ ಡಬ್ಬಗಳಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟ, ಮಡಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಹೊರತೆಗೆದು ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗೊಳಪಡಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅವಮಾನಕಾರಿ ಪ ಸಂಗಗಳಿಗೂ ಕಾನೂನು ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡಿದೆ. ಇಷ್ಟು ಕೊಡುವ ರೈತರನ್ನು ಬೀಜಗಳ್ಳರಂತೆ ನಡೆಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ನ್ಯಾಯವೆ ? ಇದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮವೇನಾಗಬಹುದು ? ಒಂದೋ ರೈತರು ತಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದಬದ್ದ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಬೀಜ ಪರೀಕ್ಷಾ ಕೇಂದ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಒಯ್ಯಬೇಕು ಅಥವಾ ಕಾನೂನಿಗಂಜಿ ಈ ಬೀಜ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಯ ಕಾರ್ಯ ಅಂದರೆ ಇಷ್ಟೂ ವರ್ಷ ನಡೆಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದ ಉತ್ತಮ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಆರಿಸುವುದು, ನೆಂಟರು, ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರಿಗೆ ಹಂಚುವ, ಇತರರ ಬಳಿಯಿರುವ ಬೀಜಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮದನ್ನು ವಿನಿಮಯ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯ ಬೀಜಗಳಿಗೆ ಶರಣಾಗಬೇಕಷ್ಟೆ. ಇದು ಸಂಪ ದ್ಭರಿತವಾದ ನಮ್ಮ ಬೀಜ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿರುವ ಮುಗ್ಧ ರೈತರನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಕಾನೂನೇ ಅವರ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಕತ್ತಿ ಮಸೆಯುವ ಧಾರ್ಷ್ಟ್ಯವಾಗಿ ತ್ತದೆ ಅಷ್ಟೆ. ಇದರಿಂದಾಗಿ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಬೀಜ, ಸ್ವಯ ಸಂಕುಲಗಳು ಕಳೆದು ಹೋಗುವ ಆಪಾಯವೂ ಇಲ್ಲದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದಲ್ಲದೆ, ಬಹುಪಾಲು ರೈತರು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯ ಬೀಜ ವಿರೀದಿಸಲು ಮುಂದಾದರೆಂದರೆ ಬೀಜಗಳ ದರ ವಿರುವುದು ಖಂಡಿತ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಲಾಭ ಯಾರಿಗೆ ? ಬೀಜ ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡುವ ಖಾಸಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಬಹುರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೇ ಹೊರತು ರೈತರಿಗಲ್ಲ.

ಈ ಮಸೂದೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೀಜಗಳ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ನಿಖರತೆಗೆ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಕ್ರಮಗಳಿವೆ . ಆದರೆ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಉತ್ತಮವೆಲ್ಲದ ಬೀಜಗಳು ದೊರೆತು ಅವರ ಬೆಳೆಪೂರ್ತಿ ಹಾಳಾಯಿತೆಂದರೆ ಅವರಿಗಾಗುವ ನಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾರು ಹೊಣೆ ? ಆಗ ರೈತ ಗ್ರಾಹಕ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ದೂರು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಎನ್ನುತ್ತದೆ ಮಸೂದೆ. ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಹಿಡುವಳಿಗಳ ಬಡ ರೈತರು ಬೆಳೆ ನಷ್ಟವಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಕಟ್ಟೆ ಹತ್ತಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಸಿಗುವವರೆಗೆ ಕಾಯಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿದೆಯೇ ? ನಮ್ಮ ಗ್ರಾಹಕ ಕೋರ್ಟುಗಳು ರೈತರಿಗೆ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಒದಗಿಸುವಷ್ಟು ಸಮರ್ಥವಾಗಿವೆಯೇ ? ಹೀಗೆ ಮಸೂದೆಯ ಈ ಭಾಗ ಕೂಡ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿಯೇ ಇದೆ.

ಇನ್ನು ಬೀಜಗಳ ಆಮದು ಮತ್ತು ರಫ್ತಿಗೆ ಕೂಡ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಠಿಣ ಕ್ರಮಗಳಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದರಿಂದ 'ಜೈವಿಕ ಚೌರ್ಯ' ಅಥವಾ ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಹೊರದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಜೀವ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯದ ಸಾಗಾಟ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಬಹುದು. ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಬೇವು, ಆರಿಶಿಣ, ಬಾಸುಮತಿ ಅಕ್ಕಿಗಳನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮವೆಂದು ಪೇಟೆಂಟ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಹೊರಟಿದ್ದ ವಿದೇಶೀ ಕಂಪೆನಿಗಳಿಗೆ 'ರೋಗಿ ಬಯಸಿದ್ದೂ ಹಾಲು ಅನ್ನ, ವೈದ್ಯ ನೀಡಿದ್ದೂ ಹಾಲು ಅನ್ನ' ಎಂಬಂತಾಗುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂದೇಹವಿಲ್ಲ.

ಬೀಜ ಮಸೂದೆಯ ಕಿದ್ದುಪಡಿಯನ್ನು ಸರಕಾರ ಕೈಬಿಡುವಂತಾಗಬೇಕು. ಅಂದರೇನೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಬೀಜ ಸಾರ್ವಭೌಮತೆಯನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ. ನಮ್ಮ ಬೆನ್ನೆಲುಬನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ.

ON THE DOLE?

Government policies, it appears, are drafted sometimes without considering long-term consequences. Consider the textile policy, for instance. The emphasis on modernisation and the promise of draping the nation may seem alluring, but in reality will deprive millions of handloom weavers of employment.

L C Jain examines the implications of such an administrative strategy, which will certainly contribute to even greater unemployment.

There is no beauty in the finest cloth if it makes hunger and unhappiness.

Kasturba Gandhi

Kasturba died long ago, but her philosophy continued to influence the Indian textile policy for many years after independence. But in 1985, Kasturba's ideology was buried by the new textile policy which reflects the philosophy of the present day rulers. The 1985 textile policy says its sole aim is to clothe the nation in finery. To this end it will encourage unrestricted import and use of latest labour-displacing textile machinery. It cares little that in the process misery and unemployment will be heaped upon millions dependent on handlooms for their livelihood.

With the textile policy of 1985, the government threw to the wolves not only the handloom weaver but also the Mahalanobis formulation of the '50s that until India's unemployment problem was solved, consumer goods production would have to be conducted through labour-intensive techniques where such options existed.

The Mahalanobis formulation cannot be dismissed as being old, since the context of unemployment to which it was addressed has not changed. Unemployment continues to haunt the Indian economy. Each successive Plan is faced with a larger backlog of the unemployed. The grimness of the situation is writ larger in the Planning Commission's note on perspectives and issues for the Eighth Plan (1991-95):

The dominating feature of demographic development is the sharp rise in the number of persons in the working age groups. The backlog of unemployment would become unmanageable unless the rate of productive employment generation is accelerated substantially to around 10 million new work opportunities per year.

The organised sector, consisting mainly of medium and large industry, infrastructure, public administration and organised services, absorbs at present an average half a million persons per year. Higher growth can raise this figure but, even then only a small fraction of new entrants will find work in the organised sector.

And given the high wages in the organised sector, [illegible] work practices and [illegible] employment cannot be encouraged [illegible] determined effort will be required to generate new work opportunities [illegible] and related activities [illegible] small industries [illegible] is asking 95 lakh persons (or 19 out of every 20 job-seekers) annually to knock at the door of the village and small industry sector (of which handlooms are by far the largest segment) for their livelihood.

But the government's 1985 textile policy has shut the door on them. It has opted for a course diametrically opposite to that defined in [illegible] its proven prop[illegible] and less labour [illegible] to expand pro[illegible] the policy has [illegible]

[illegible] of handloom

weavers is colossal. A micro-study of handloom weavers in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur (Bihar) found that as many as 101 families out of 179 had given up weaving. The stated reasons for this were: (a) high cost of yarn, (b) marketing difficulty, and (c) lack of capital.

At the macro level, the estimated loss of employment is a staggering 3.6 million full-time persons or a total of 6 million persons including part-time workers. This is based on a close scrutiny of the official claims of handloom production, which has been exaggerated to the extent of nearly doubling the figures, to conceal the magnitude of displacement of labour. As much as 1400 million metres of cloth shown to be produced by handlooms is in fact produced by powerlooms which are allowed to poach freely on the hank yarn intended for hand looms.

An equally damaging implication of the 1985 textile policy is the widespread downgrading of the skill of our most accomplished weavers.

Under the guise of providing employment to handloom weavers, the 1985 policy stated 'The responsibility for the entire production of controlled cloth shall be transferred to the handloom sector by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan.'

The real motive was to relieve the mills of the burden of producing cheaper varieties for the common person. In 1984, the mills cited their obligation to supply a fixed percentage of controlled cloth as one of the main reasons for sickness in the textile mill industry.

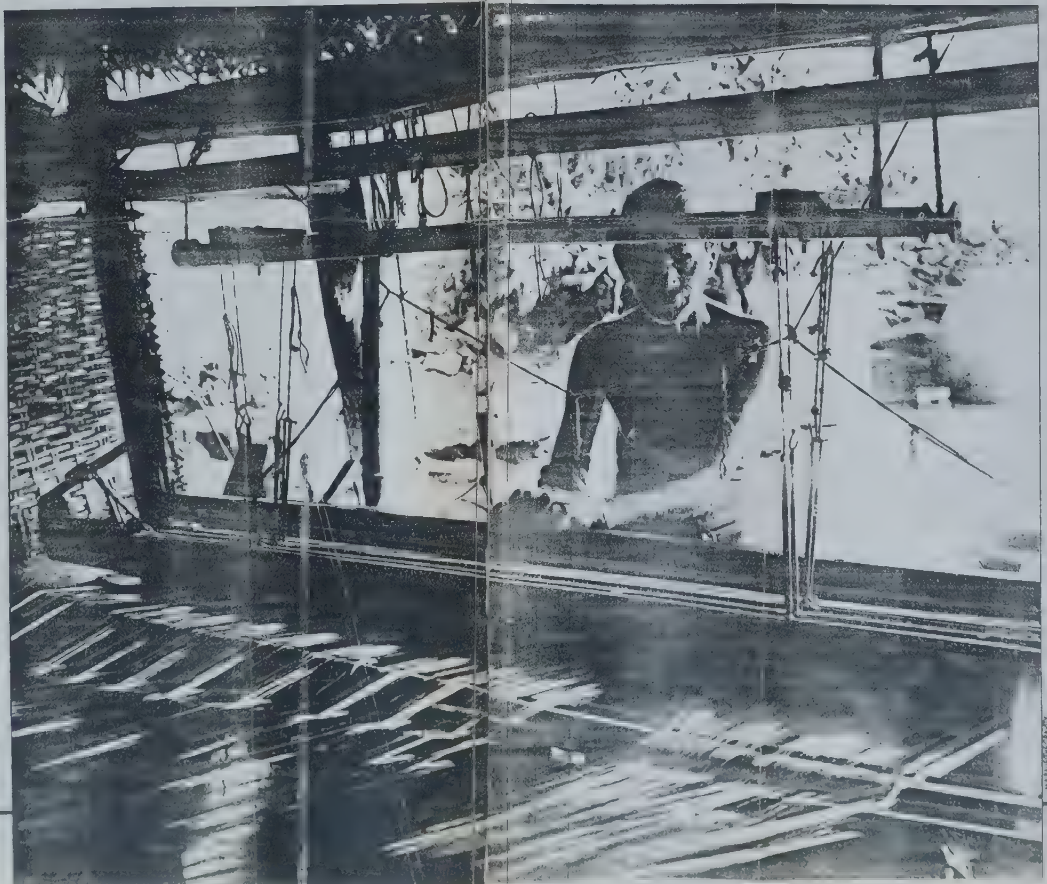
If the janata cloth scheme could make healthy mills sick, how did the government expect it to rejuvenate handlooms, which have next to no resources to fall back upon?

In 1987, a study team of the labour ministry in fact found both substantial loss in wages and coercion to which handloom weavers are subjected.

The weavers were being compelled by the apex societies to produce janata dhotis and sarees. Their regular production is accepted for marketing only if they provide a matching quantity of Janata cloth. This coercion inflicted on the weavers a loss of at least Rs 2 per day by way of lower wages.

Government spokespersons have unfortunately not hesitated in rubbing salt into wounds. The textile minister told Parliament (April, 1988) that 'Janata cloth is meant for weavers of very poor skill. It is not compulsory for anyone to accept it; it is a choice before them. If they can get high quality, because of the skill and other things, and market also, they are welcome to do so.' It is astounding that after deliberately depriving the weavers of their established markets and pushing them to the lowest end of the market, the policy makers should pretend that there is no compulsion. [illegible] there is compulsion on the weaver [illegible] compulsion to feed their [illegible] one meal a day. The govern[illegible]

[illegible]



starvation which induce sweated labour. Surely it must know that 'it takes five persons working on two looms to produce a pair of Janata dhoti and sari in a day and they get only Rs 23.26 towards their wage. As they get less than Rs 5 per head per day, they are forced to live in poverty.'

While handlooms are its victims, the policy is not without its favourites. For the mills and powerlooms, its decisions flow promptly and to the latter's utmost satisfaction.

What the Indian Cotton Mills Federation (ICMF) records in its 1986 annual report on follow-up action by the government needs no comment.

Almost immediately after the announcement of the policy, the government issued a notification granting full fibre flexibility to the textile industry. Effective from August 1985, excise duty on polyester and acrylic fibres and certain polyster blend fabrics and yarns was reduced. The licensed capacity and production of synthetic fibres increased considerably after the announcement of the policy.

The policy recognised that one of the main reasons for the sickness in the industry was inadequate modernisation and renovation of old and obsolete plant and machinery. A fund is now established by the government with an amount of Rs 750 crores to meet the modernisation requirements of the industry over the next five years and Rs 100 crores provided to be advanced as special loans to selected weak but viable units to meet a part of the promoter's contribution on mouth-watering conditions. The loan carries a mere six per cent interest per annum and is repayable over a period of twelve years with a moratorium of six years. The interest loss is to be subsidised by the government.

The 1987 ICMF report, had some more good news for the mill owners:

It may be recalled that the Government of India had announced in December 1985, a three year policy for exports of cotton yarn. In terms of this policy, the quantitative ceiling announced for 1986-88 were: 20 million kg for counts 1 to 40, 20 million kg for counts 41 to 60 and free export counts 61 and above.

Due to persistent representations to the government by the ICMF and Texprocil, the quantum for exports of cotton yarn upto 60 was merged and the aggregate ceiling of 40 million kg was fixed.

The handlooms mainly use yarn of 1 to 40 counts. The intention of the mills was to export mainly the yarn needed by handlooms. Ultimately 85 million kg of yarn was exported. As a result, yarn prices for domestic weavers rose by 50 to 78 per cent.

Under the guise of providing employment to handloom weavers, the 1985 textile policy stated: 'The responsibility for the entire production of controlled cloth shall be transferred to the handloom sector by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan.' The real motive was to relieve the mills of the burden of producing cheaper material for the common person. In 1984, the mills cited their obligation to supply a fixed percentage of controlled cloth as one of the main reasons for sickness in the textile mill industry. If the janata cloth scheme could make healthy mills sick, how did the government expect it to rejuvenate handlooms, which have next to no resources to fall back upon?

How much of a king (or 'the final arbiter of all our policies', as the textile minister put it) the consumer is for the government is also revealing.

Within the mill sector, the most partial treatment has been meted out to the man-made textile sector:

—Excise duty was brought down from Rs 45 to Rs 25 per kg in August 1985. The duty on polyester cotton and polyester-viscose blended yarns was also reduced at the same time, (an estimated revenue loss of Rs 300 crores).

—In February 1988 (1988-89 Budget), N D Tiwari slashed the excise duty further (a revenue loss of Rs 250 crores).

—In each of the above instances, the finance minister assured Parliament 'that the entire (excise) relief would be passed on to the consumers in the form of lower prices'.

—Tiwari in fact threatened that if the manufacturers fail, he would 'withdraw the concessions'.

—Several MPs in the Rajya Sabha on August 11, 1988 alleged that out of the Rs 250 crores relief meant for consumers 'one particular industrial house got a major chunk'.

—Not only MPs, even the ICMF has accused the man-made textile industry of siphoning off the benefits intended for the consumers.

—Now, the textile minister has also publicly acknowledged that 'practically no benefit has reached the ultimate consumer'.

This is one illustration of how the textile policy has fulfilled its principal aim of 'clothing the poorer sections of the people at affordable prices'.

Viewed alongside other steps outlined in it, the policy seems to be nothing short of a three-pronged attack, designed to annihilate the handloom weavers:

—First, the main traditional market of the handloom weavers is shrunk by setting free the mills and powerlooms, thereby pushing a number of the handloom weavers out of their traditional source of income.

—Second, the main raw material of the handloom is allowed to be diverted to powerlooms on a huge scale without let or hindrance as also to the export market on an unprecedented scale, thus subjecting the surviving weavers to unemployment.

—Third, the handloom weavers are pinned down at the very low end of the market, ie, the production of controlled cloth where the degree of weaving skills required is elementary, weaving wages are the lowest, and future prospects the bleakest.

EDIT PAGE

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

President Bush appreciates the sacrifices Pakistan already has made to keep us all safer from terrorism.

— Colin Powell

Get Even, Not Mad

US to name Pakistan a major non-NATO ally

For a government that has sold the recent improvement in Indo-US relations as its greatest foreign policy achievement of the last five years, Thursday turned out to be a day of red faces all around. In Islamabad, on the final leg of the three-nation South Asian tour that began in India, secretary of state Colin Powell spoke the words which his hosts of less than 48 hours earlier least expected to hear. The US, said Powell, will name Pakistan a "major non-NATO" ally, thereby making it easier for the country to access American arms. The 'reward', which comes in the wake of recent revelations about Islamabad's role in N-proliferation and its continued foot-dragging in the US war against terrorism, left many in South Block fuming. The significance of the moment, however, lay not in what it appeared to promise — the fine print suggests that the new status will not entail any major military concessions to Islamabad — but in the fact that it caught New Delhi completely unawares. Clearly, the secretary of state didn't think it worthwhile to take India — a valued strategic partner of the US, according to the BJP's hype — into confidence before going public on an issue that has the potential of embarrassing Atalji's government in the run-up to the general elections.

That said, the government, too, cannot escape its share of the blame. In claiming credit for America's supposed strategic shift in the subcontinent over the last few years, it has consistently overlooked evidence to the contrary. But reality, alas, has a way of catching with rhetoric. In international relations, as the old cliche goes, there are no permanent friends or enemies, just permanent interests. The Bush administration, desperate to catch Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaida followers before the presidential battle hots up, needs Islamabad's unstinted backing. And it will do what it takes to secure that support, regardless of how these tactics are viewed in a third country. Rather than — to risk a sexist metaphor — behave like the 'wronged' woman, New Delhi would do well to respond to the American provocation in a measured way. Instead of crying foul, it must learn to engage Washington on more realistic terms, extracting what strategic, economic or indeed, technological pay-offs it can in the process. In the present case, it could perhaps make a strong case for 'compensation' in an area which has no direct bearing on America's relationship with Islamabad, namely, the resumption of high technology transfers to India. As they say in America, don't get mad, get even.

Spain distances itself from US after Madrid bombings

VIEW

A sensible move which India should follow

Spain has done well to respond to the train bombings in Madrid by saying it will withdraw its troops from Iraq. The Spanish people had, from the outset, been opposed to Madrid's involvement with Operation Iraq. However, the then government headed by Jose Aznar [illegible]

Forests of the Night

BJP's Sops to Tribals a Poll Ploy

By Nandini Sundar

In its haste to proclaim its commitment to tribal rights, the BJP has played a joke on tribals and other forest dwellers. Indeed, in what should amount to contempt, a full-page advertisement promising regularisation of tribal occupations of forest land up to 1992 appeared a day after the Supreme Court rejected the de-reservation of forest land for this purpose (February 23).

While getting land titles is critical to the livelihood of millions, for the BJP the issue appears to be little more than an electoral stratagem, one successfully tested in the last Chhattisgarh assembly elections. The regularisation promise is particularly potent now given the preceding two years of uncertainty on evictions. Such rash pre-election promises are bad both for tribals and the forests, as fresh felling in the hope of claiming forest land has already begun.

In this context, the role of the ministry of environment and forests (MEF) is particularly sordid given that barely two years ago, it readily sanctioned summary evictions in violation of its own procedural guidelines and a 1995 SC judgment requiring that no forest dweller be evicted without being heard. Across the country in 2002-03, families were evicted from forest land, sometimes at gunpoint, accompanied by the razing of huts and the destruction of standing crops. Obviously, the ministry has turned defender of the traditional rights of tribals on forest land, because of the elections.



The term encroachment comprises several different phenomena. When carried out by landless forest dwellers, often forcibly displaced by large projects, this usually involves taking over state forest land for subsistence cultivation. A lot of encroachment, however, involves powerful interests like petrol pumps, schools and golf clubs.

For another category of people, the term encroachment is really a misnomer, involving lands whose very status as state-owned forests is disputed. Precisely in order to address these issues, the MEF issued six circulars in 1990 of which three covered encroachments, and the need to settle disputed land and leases before evictions. For years, these were not implemented. Then the forest case (WP 202/1995, T N Godavarman Thirumulpad vs Union of India) came before the SC. The court's record here is mixed, often betraying a centralising tendency and an ignorance of forest issues, for instance, when it ruled that all forests should be managed under working plans prepared by the forest department. Among other things, this ignores the widely welcomed 1988 forest policy which encouraged community involvement in forest management. The immediate history of the encroachments issue bears out the degree to which such decisions are being centralised. In November 2001, the court restrained the Centre from regularising even pre-1980 encroachments. In February 2002, this was followed by a request to state governments to declare the extent of encroachments. Many states treated this as a carte blanche for evictions, an erroneous impression which was strengthened by the MEF's circular in May 2000 calling for a summary eviction of forest encroachers by September 30. It cited the SC, although no eviction orders have yet been issued by the apex court.

On May 9, the SC set up a Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to monitor its orders in the forest case. With three ministry officials, two wildlife conservationists, but no representative of forest dwellers, the composition of the committee is highly skewed. The CEC's July 2002 recommendations were truly draconian, banning all future regularisation, and even allowing for the possibility of excessive use of force and unprovoked firing in the process of eviction.

Public mobilisation then compelled the ministry in October 2002 to ask states to constitute joint committees of revenue, forest and tribal welfare officials to settle disputed cases. For an entire year, other than in Maharashtra, little action has been taken. The rediscovery of the issue just before elections has resulted in confused and contradictory formulations. A February 3 MEF circular on the conversion of forest villages into revenue villages says: "Only eligible category of pre-1980 encroachment shall be considered for regulations..."

On February 5, however, the same ministry decided to dereserve forest land in order to regularise tribal encroachments up to 1993. The order contains no clear procedure for doing this, allows the unfeasible schedule of only one year and appears to apply only to tribals, leaving the lakhs of equally poor non-tribals stranded.

The point of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 which centralised the power to dereserve forests was that the Centre could be trusted to be more responsible than states. However, with a party willing to subvert all norms to win elections, it appears that this power-in-trust must be abdicated to the Supreme Court. Yet, SC intervention is no substitute for a transparent settlement process — involving gram sabhas and villagers themselves for a sustainable solution to encroachment. Along with the forests and the rights of poor forest dwellers, good governance has also become a casualty of the elections.

(The writer is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Law and Governance, JNU.)

Cinema Paradiso

Raj Kumar Santoshi, who has a string of three National and six Filmfare award-winning films to his credit, is known for the thematic and social relevance of his productions. Considered one of the more committed film-makers in Bollywood, he spoke to Sudip Talukdar on a variety of issues including the vision behind his film-making and the impact of globalisation on Hindi cinema:

In your opinion, how far has globalisation impacted Bollywood?

I think it has had a very limited effect. However, in a sense film-makers are now more open to some of the techniques in vogue, worldwide. Computer-generated reality, for instance. I have used it in a shot in *Khakee* in which the protagonist holds a corrupt superior by the scruff of his neck and allows him to dangle precariously outside an open window, in a high-rise building. Besides, I have relied on a Hollywood audio library to impart realism to the fire-fight sequences, especially the rhythmic bursts from AK-47 rifles. Lastly, six-channel sound is gaining acceptance.

What do you make of the current trend to pattern TV ads and jingles on old songs and films, often in black and white?

Advertisers have hit upon the idea of capitalising on nostalgia and feel-good factors to grab the viewers' attention in a 10-second slot and also appeal to their sense of humour. As the saying goes, a change is as good as a feast. Actually, the trend started a couple of years ago with an ad for popularising the consumption of eggs, based on an old-time favourite, *Meri jaan, meri jaan...*, a song penned by my father P L Santoshi for *Shehnai* (1947), which he also directed.



Q A

I feel that cinema should start walking on its own feet, rather than depend on crutches. Songs and dances ought not to be a condition of film-making. The pattern should be broken.

Even while being rooted in the mainstream, what motivates you to venture off the beaten track, evident in films like 'Damini', 'Lajja' and 'Khakee'?

I am driven by challenges and don't like to stay in a comfort zone for long. The need to break fresh ground or explore a new idea or territory keeps me going. And prompts me to undertake a lot of research. I want to be close to the heart of my subject. I want to know what motivates him or her, what were their circumstances, what they were, how they interacted socially, etc.

What exactly is your message in 'Khakee' and how it is doing at the box office?

People who don khaki must understand the significance of the colour as it invests them with the responsibility to uphold law and order and to protect the innocent. And of their need to insulate the institution from political interference and ensure that it functions as an independent body. Conversely, the public should view policemen not in isolation, but as fellow human beings, with similar likes and dislikes, strengths and failings and also try to understand their problems. I have attempted to convey the message in an entertaining format, without losing sight of its social relevance. However, I am rather mystified by the mixed response to *Khakee* at the box office. In some territories it has been doing well, in others the results are average. The returns don't quite follow any pattern.

'Khakee' is also said to be the country's first digital film...

It is a process wherein the entire negative is scanned to correct colour,and texture to get the desired effect. We have used a lot of colours from the background to make them accord with the setting. In a number of scenes, the general tone matches the earthy shade of the men in khaki. The enhanced visual gives the film a different kind of look.

Why did a better crafted and a National award-winning film like 'The Legend of Bhagat Singh' fail at the box office?

My well-wishers and friends told me that one too many Bhagat Singhs were released at about the same time, and this was why my version failed to click. But I feel that this is just not true. Because, content-wise, *The Legend* seems more credible and realistic. After all, my team spent a whole year researching the subject in depth. A lot of effort went into its making, but the box office response disappointed and pained me. I believe that research is the foundation of verisimilitude. Otherwise, why would Hollywood invest so much of time, effort and money in getting things right. *Saving Private Ryan* was shot with less advanced generation of cameras for a realistic and a documentary feel. I believe there is nothing like the sequence on Normandy landings in any cinema.

Do you think songs and dances are essential for the success of a film, even as audiences are becoming more demanding and knowledgeable?

I don't think so. If I could get away with it, then I would. I include songs only where I consider them essential. Songs have to be subject-oriented. They are also integral to music in India and allow a greater identification with the protagonist. I still feel that cinema should start walking on its own feet rather than depend on crutches. Songs and dances ought not to be a condition of film-making. This pattern should be broken.

What are you now working on?

I have two projects in hand: *Ranveer*, a social drama for the A B Corporation, with both the Bachchans and another for Balaji Productions. The third is based on Prithvi Raj Chauhan, currently being researched by my team

Pakistan upgrade is Faustian deal: analysts

By Chidanand Rajghatta
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Washington: The Bush administration has struck another Faustian deal with Pakistan to forgive its nuclear proliferation and enhance its ally status in exchange for help in the war on terrorism, according to US analysts.

Washington's declaration of Pakistan as a "Major non-Nato Ally (MnNA)" is being widely seen here as a quid pro quo for delivering Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden. Despite protestations from the administration that such a tag has been in the works of "months and months and months," the timing of the announcement during Colin Powell's visit to Islamabad amid a firefight suggests an urgent barter, analysts said.

On his way back out of Pakistan en route to Kuwait, Powell tried to downplay Pakistan's upgrade saying "in some instances it is more symbolic than practical," and he didn't know "if Pakistan...will be able to take great advantage of it."

"It is part of a continuing relationship and we have been doing things to demonstrate to the Pakistanis that we are good, solid, long term partners," Powell explained, adding, "The same relationship we want to have with India."

It was not immediately clear if he meant Washington wanted to name India an MNNA too, but other state department officials pointed out that India had got its own rewards from the US in the form of a new strategic relationship.

Powell acknowledged though that the enhanced status will give Pakistan greater access to "excess defense articles and property that we might have."

Amid apprehensions in Indian circles that this might lead to resumption of major arms supplies to Pakistan, Powell said Musharraf has not raised the question of sale of F-16s.

Some experts said the MNNA deal reminded them of the agreement between the Reagan administration and Pakistan in the 1980s when Washington winked at Islamabad's clandestine nuclear programme, to use the country as a staging ground for the Afghan war. That policy led to the birth of Islamist terrorist forces and helped Pakistan complete its nuclear cycle. "It looks like a deal," William Triplett, a former Senate aide and veteran analyst said of the MNNA status to Pakistan. "Of course we don't know who, if anyone, is going to be produced in the next 24 hours. Even if it is Osama himself, Pakistan should be paid off on the economic side than with more weapons."

Even Pakistani experts were surprised at the timing of the announcement, with Hussain Haqqani, a former diplomat, pointing out that Musharraf always appeared to produce something on the eve of important meetings with the Americans. In fact, the speculation in the analysts community was that Musharraf and ISI have always known Zawahiri's whereabouts and MNNA was just the price for selling him down the river.

On the flight to Kuwait a journalist asked Powell what he had to say to people that say Pakistan has dealt with A.Q. Khan with kid gloves and the US deals with Pakistan with kid gloves.

"There's a lot of skepticism that none of this will really come out and that the network (of nuclear proliferation) will just get covered up. No one else will get punished. And you come here and you give them non-NATO, major NATO, whatever status," the journalist observed.

Pak troops pound besieged militants

Hopes Grow Of Nabbing Qaida's Number Two

By Hafiz Wazir

Wana: Pakistani troops near the Afghan border pounded a besieged group of militants, possibly including Osama bin Laden's second-in-command, on Friday and were advancing despite fierce resistance, officials said.

Pakistani soldiers have faced tough opposition from suspected Al Qaeda militants and Pakistani tribesmen in the South Waziristan area since launching a sweep on Tuesday, leading to speculation they may be protecting Ayman al-Zawahri, bin Laden's right-hand man.

Fifteen Pakistani soldiers had been killed in the fighting since Thursday but, despite the losses, they were closing in on the militants' positions, said a government official based in the border region.

"At least 15 soldiers have been killed since yesterday," said the official, who declined to be identified.

"There's ferocious resistance but a house-to-house search has started on the outskirts of Shin Warsak," he said.

The fighting, involving several thousand government troops against several hundred militants, is centred on an area to the west of the town of Wana that includes the village of Shin Warsak.

Helicopters clattered in the sky over the battle while the boom of explosions and "[illegible] of



A television grab of Osama Bin Laden and his top lieutenant Al Zawahri that was broadcast by Al Jazeera

start of that conflict approaches.

It would also be a boost to George W. Bush ahead of this year's presidential election, in which security is a major theme. It would strengthen his campaign to keep allies on side in the war on terror after last week's bloody Madrid train bombings.

"We are closing in on them. Their defense seems to be dying down," one sen- were believed to have taken refuge in Shin Warsak, another official said.

The militants' armoured vehicle had come under fire and there was speculation some of those inside, perhaps Zawahri, might have been wounded, the official said.

Afghanistan sent hundreds of extra troops to its border with Pakistan, opposite the area of the battle, to stop militants crossing [illegible] believe they were shielding an important militant.

Hopes of catching a senior Al Qaeda leader have come to nought several times in the past, but given the ferocity of the present battle, analysts say at the very least some senior militants could be among the defenders.

Meanwhile, in Washington US national security advisor Condoleezza Rice has [illegible]id that any capture of Za-

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Now Onida TVs have a 3-year extended warranty.

The bad news:

The offer is only valid for the Indo-Pak series.



The Fastest aren't the Biggest!



Bamboo (*Bambusa Vulgaris*)
Fastest growing plant. Some of the species of Bamboo are known to grow at the rate of 5 cm/h or almost 5 feet/day.



Cheetah (*Acinonyx Jubatus*)
Fastest animal on land. Weighing just 30-72 kg (1/3rd of a Tiger), the Cheetah can reach speeds of 110 km/h within seconds.



Peregrine Falcon (*Falcon Peregrinus*)
Fastest bird in air. Weighing just about 2 pounds (1/8th of an Albatross), this bird can reach speeds in excess of 300 km/h.

SUNDAY TIMES

appointments

international

ALL of them ski and play music. What with Mozart and the Alps. And to cap it, capital Vienna was the music, art, culture capital for many, many decades. Mozart lives on in a culture that thrives on appreciation of classical music. And you can still cop a ride on a Victoria, which goes by the name of flaker in Vienna.

Those who like living in the present can take comfort from the fact that Mercer's overall quality of life survey 2002 which evaluates 250 cities world wide has placed Vienna on par with Vancouver in Canada at the second place. Zurich scores the highest. All this and no traffic worries either!

Those on business could find themselves in any of the five geographical regions - lower Austria (Vienna), upper Austria, Salzburg, Steiermark and Tirol. Austrians are hiring in fields like sales and marketing, IT, personnel and engineering. And the European economic slowdown doesn't seem to have affected that. Vehicle manufacturing, engine produc-



your tastes run to Ice, Ice... visit the Eisriesenwelt Caves, the largest accessible ice caves in the world. You can explore their passages, caverns, ice formations and frozen waterfalls.

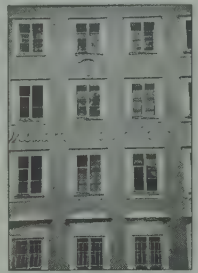
But if you are really musical, don't give Mozart's Salzburg's a miss. Churches, plazas, courtyards, fountains are all cupped in by the mountains. You can check out the skiing at the Arlberg region. Bad Gastein is the historical health spa, casino and ski area. And don't get confused between Leinz and Linz which are actually two different cities. Linz is where the industrial action took place. The first all-metal airplane was built here by

Once the storks brought Mozart here and the republic hasn't stopped singing still.

upper Austria which was the location of one of Nazi concentration camp. Its granite quarry, Stairway of Death, caused many a deaths.

You could also see what the storks love visiting the most. In the small town of Rust, you will see storks from the end of March, who bring their babies here and fly away in August.

Austria may be more expensive than the European and North American countries but it is nowhere as expensive as Switzerland or Great Britain. While housing, whether temporary or more permanent, is not a problem you would end up paying quite a bit.



Mozart's birthplace, Salzburg

Shopping

Shop for crystal, costume and fashion jewellery, clocks, sweaters, china, ski equipment, hand-painted Augarten porcelain, antiques, leather goods, coats, hats, wood carvings, enamel, petit point, art, old books, pottery, local handicrafts and recordings of Viennese waltzes. Of course, you will get a wide, wide selection of music.

Eating

Much of Austrian cuisine is non-vegetarian though it is said to be more versatile than other central European cuisines. Variety includes soups, veal, pork and turkey, boiled beef served with horseradish and apple-sauce, sausages, trout, chicken and wild-game dishes. Though you will easily find the potato salad that accompanies the famous Wiener Schnitzel. For dessert there is chocolate-covered marzipan, cream cheese and whipped cream is a favourite topping. Fluffy egg soufflé in Salzburg and Linzer torte a raspberry-and-almond tart in Linz are special. Austrians eat many meals including a heavy-ish midmorning brunch and a late-afternoon snack of cakes and coffee. Heurigers are wine taverns in the Vienna suburbs of Grinzing, Neustift or Sievering. You get wine, food and song. Since a [illegible] over a cup of

ಕನ್ನಡಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ

ಮೊದಲು ಆಧಾರ ಸಿದ್ಧಪಡಿಸಿ, ನಂತರ ನಿಯೋಗ ಹೋಗಿ: ಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ಸಲಹೆ



ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಲ್ಲಾ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಭವನದನ್ನು ಸುತ್ತೂರು ಮಠದ ಶ್ರೀ ಶಿವರಾತ್ರಿ ದೇಶಿಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳು ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ಉದ್ಘಾಟಿಸಿದರು. ಶಾಸಕ ಎಚ್.ಎಸ್. ಶಂಕರಲಿಂಗೇಗೌಡ, ಕೇಂದ್ರದ ಮಾಜಿ ಸಚಿವ ವಿ. ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಪ್ರಸಾದ್, ಅಂಕಣಕಾರ ಪ್ರೊ.ಎಚ್ಚೆಸ್, ರಾಜ್ಯ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ವಾಸು, ಜಿ.ಪಂ. ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಕೆ.ಪಿ. ಬಿಲಿಯಾಮ್, ಕಸಾಪ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಸಿ. ಗಿರಿಗೌಡ ಇದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಕನ್ನಡಪ್ರಭ ವಾರ್ತೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು, ಸೆ.19

ಕನ್ನಡಕ್ಕೆ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ ಕೇಳುವ ಮೊದಲು ಆಧಾರ ಸಿದ್ಧಪಡಿಸಿ, ನಂತರ ನಿಯೋಗ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗಿ ಎಂದು ಕೇಂದ್ರದ ಮಾಜಿ ಸಚಿವ ವಿ. ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ಅವರು ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿ ಎನ್. ಧರ್ಮಸಿಂಗ್ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಸಲಹೆ ನೀಡಿದರು.

ವಿಜಯನಗರ 1ನೇ ಹಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಭವನ ಉದ್ಘಾಟನೆ ಆಂಗವಾಗಿ ಹೊರತಂದಿರುವ 'ಮೈಸೂರು ಸಿರಿ' ಸ್ಮರಣ ಸಂಚಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅವರು ಮಾತನಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು.

ಗಡಿ ವಿವಾದ, ಕಾವೇರಿ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ, ಹೈಕೋರ್ಟ್ ಪೀಠ, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ- ಹೀಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ವಿಷಯ ಬಂದರೂ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು ದೆಹಲಿಗೆ ಸರ್ವ ಪಕ್ಷ ನಿಯೋಗ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುವುದಾಗಿ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ರೀತಿ ಮಾಡುವುದರಿಂದ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಬಗೆಹರಿಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಬದಲಿಗೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಪೂರಕವಾದ ಅಂಕಿಗಳನ್ನು ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಒದಗಿಸಿಕೊಡುವ ಕಡೆ ಗಮನಹರಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂದರು.

ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನದ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು ಯಾರಿಗೆ ನಿಯೋಗ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಬಾರದು ಆದರ ಬದಲಿಗೆ ಈ ರೀತಿ ಕೇಳಿಲು ಇಂಥ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಯಾವುದು?. ನಮ್ಮ ಬಳಿ ಯಾವ ಆಧಾರಗಳಿವೆ ಎಂಬ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಗಮನಸೆಳೆಯಬೇಕಿತ್ತು ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಹೇಳಿದರು.

ತಮಿಳಿಗೆ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿದೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಚಿಳವಳಿಯ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಭಾಷಾ ಚಿಳವಳಿ ಚಿಳಿಸಿದೆ. ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರವನ್ನೆ ಆಲುಗಾಡಿಸಿದ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ 1983 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಷಾ ಹಾಗೂ ರೈತ ಚಿಳವಳಿಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಮೊದಲ ಬಾರಿಗೆ ಕಾಂಗ್ರೆಸ್ ಪಕ್ಷ ಸೋಲು ಅನುಭವಿಸಬೇಕಾಯಿತು ಎಂದ ಅವರು, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಪಂಡಿತರು, ಸಂಶೋಧಕರು, ಇತಿಹಾಸಕಾರರ ಜೊತೆ ಸಮಾಲೋಚಿಸಬೇಕು. ಒಂದು ಸಾವಿರ ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಇರಬೇಕೆಂಬ. ನಾವು ಆಧಾರಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಿದರೆ ಆಗ ಪಂಡಿತ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಸ್ಥಾನಮಾನ ದೊರೆಯುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದರು.

■ **ಪ್ರಚಾರದ ವಸ್ತುಗಳು:** ಗಡಿ, ಭಾಷೆ, ಜಲ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳು ಈಗ ಪ್ರಚಾರದ ವಸ್ತುಗಳಾಗಿವೆ. ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ- ಮೆಟ್ಟು ಪಾಳ್ಯಂ ರೈಲು ಮಾರ್ಗ ಆಸುಪಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಲು ಏನು ಮಾಡಬೇಕು ಅದನ್ನು ಮಾಡಬೇಕಿ ಹೊರತು ಕತಾಬ್ದಿ ರೈಲನ್ನು 15 ನಿಮಿಷ ತಡೆದರೆ ಈ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಕಾರ್ಯಗತವಾದೀತೆ" ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸಿ, ಪರೋಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ಶಾಸಕ ವಾಟಾಳ್ ನಾಗರಾಜ್ ಅವರನ್ನು ಟೀಕಿಸಿದರು.

■ **ಇಚ್ಛಾ ಶಕ್ತಿಯ ಕೊರತೆ:** ಭಾಷೆ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ವಿಚಾರ. ಎಚ್ಚರಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯೆ ನೀಡಬೇಕು ಎಂದ ಅವರು, ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷೆ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಿಸಬೇಕು ಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಆಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಕನ್ನಡ ಜನರ ಕನಸುಗಳು ಸಾಕಾರ ಆಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಆಡಳಿತ ನಡೆಸುವವರಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಇಚ್ಛಾಶಕ್ತಿ ಇಲ್ಲದಿರುವುದು ಕಾರಣ ಎಂದು ಅವರು ವಿಷಾದದಿಂದ ಹೇಳಿದರು.

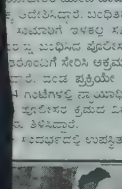
ಕಾವೇರಿ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಮಂಡಳಿ ಪುನಾರಚನೆಯಿಂದ ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ನ್ಯಾಯ ದೊರಕುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದೀ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಜನ ಒಂದಾಗಿ ಹೋರಾಟ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ಆಗ ಯಾರೂ ಏನು ಮಾಡಲಾಗದು. ಇದುವರೆಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ನ್ಯಾಯಮಂಡಳಿಯಿಂದ ನೀರಿನ ವಿವಾದ ಬಗೆಹರಿದಿಲ್ಲ. ರಾಜಭವನಕ್ಕೆ ಬೀಗ ಹಾಕುವ ದುರಂದಲೂ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಬಗೆಹರಿಯದು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮಾತುಕತೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ವಿವಾದ ಬಗೆಹರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು.

■ **ಸ್ವಾಭಿಮಾನ ಇರಬೇಕು:** ಭಾಷೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ದುರಾಭಿಮಾನ ಇರಬಾರದು. ಆದರೆ ಸ್ವಾಭಿಮಾನ ಇರಬೇಕು. ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವುದು ನಿರಭಿಮಾನ. ಇದು ಹೋಗಬೇಕು. ಮಾತೃಭಾಷೆ ತಾಯಿ- ಮಗುವಿನ ಸಂಬಂಧದ್ದು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮಾತೃಭಾಷೆಯ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಗೆ ನಾವೇ ಕಾರಣಕರ್ತರಾಗಬೇಕು ಎಂದರು.

ಉಪ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿ ಸಿದರಾಮಯ್ಯ, ಅವರ ಗೈರು ಹಾಜರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸುತ್ತೂರು ಮಠದ ಶ್ರೀ ಶಿವರಾತ್ರಿ ದೇಶಿಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಭವನ ಉದ್ಘಾಟಿಸಿದರು. ಅಂಕಣಕಾರ ಪ್ರೊ. ಎಚ್ಚೆಸ್ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆ ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಜಿ.ಪಂ. ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಕೆ.ಪಿ. ಬಿಲಿಯಾಮ್, ಮೇಯರ್ ದಕ್ಷಿಣಾಮೂರ್ತಿ, ಕಾಕಲಾದಾ ಎಸ್.ಸಿ. ರಂಗಸ್ವಿಂಗೇಗೌಡ, ಕೆ.ಪಿ. ಶ್ರೀಕಂಠೇಗೌಡ, ರಾಜ್ಯ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ವಾಸು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಅತಿಥಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಗಿದ್ದರು.

ಜಲ್ಲಾ ಕಸಾಪ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಸಿ.ಗಿರಿಗೌಡ ಸ್ವಾಗತಿಸಿದರು. ಗೌ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಮಾನಸ ಸಂಗಮೇಶ್ವರ ವಂದಿಸಿದರು. ಶಿಕ್ಷಕಿ ಜಿ. ಜೈಲಿಂಗ, ಮಿಷ್ಠಕೆರೆ ಗೋಪಾಲ್ ಇತರರು ಇದ್ದರು.

■ **ಕೊಡುಗೆ:** ಇದೇ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ ಪುರಸಭಾ ಮಾಜಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಎಂ. ಪುಟ್ಟಸ್ವಾಮಯ್ಯ ಅವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಪತ್ನಿ ಎಸ್.ಆರ್. ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಣಿಯವರ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿದ ನಿಧಿ ಪತ್ನಿ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಲು 10 ಸಾವಿರ ರು. ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಚಿಕ್ಕಿಗೆ ಜೆಜಲ್ ಕನ್ನಡ ಸಂಘದವರು ಬಡ ಸಾವಿರ ರು. ನೀಡಿದರು.



'222 ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೆ 1200 ಕೋಟಿ ರು. ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ'

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ಸಣ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಪಂಚಾಯಿತಿಗಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ 1,200 ಕೋಟಿ ರುಪಾಯಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಿರುವುದಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಪೌರಾಡಳಿತ ಸಚಿವ ಎಸ್.ಆರ್.ಪಾಟೀ ಅವರು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಅವರು ಭಾನುವಾರ ಗದಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಮುಳಗುಂದ ಪಟ್ಟಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಣ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳ ಸಮಗ್ರ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿರುವ 6 ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣಗಳನ್ನು ಉದ್ಘಾಟಿಸಿ, ಮಾತನಾಡಿದರು.

ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಟ್ಟು 222 ಸಣ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳಿದ್ದು, ಅವುಗಳ ಮೂಲ ಭೂತ ಸೌಕರ್ಯಗಳಾದ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು, ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ, ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ವಸ್ತುಗಳ ವಿಲೇವಾರಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು ಎಂದರು.

ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ಬಡ ಜನರಿಗೆ ಮೂಲಭೂತ ಸೌಕರ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲದಿರುವ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳಿಗೆ ಶೇಕಡಾ 50 ರಷ್ಟು ಜನರು ವಲಸೆ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯನ್ನು ತಪ್ಪಿಸಲು ಮೂಲಭೂತ ಸೌಕರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದರು. ಸಮಗ್ರ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಸದುಪಯೋಗ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸಣ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಆಸ್ತಿ ತೆರಿಗೆದಾರರು ತೆರಿಗೆ ಸಂದಾಯ ಮಾಡಲು ಹಾಗೂ ಶೇಕಡಾ 80ರಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರತಿ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಪಂಚಾಯಿತಿಗಳು ತೆರಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ವಸೂಲಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಈ ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಆನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹೊದಲ ಹಂತವಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ 33 ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು, 123 ಪಥರ ಅಭಿಯಂತರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು, 135 ಕಿರಿಯ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ಅಭಿಯಂತರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು, 45 ಕಿರಿಯ ಇಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಿಕಲ್ ಅಭಿಯಂತರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು, 92 ಗಿವಸ್ಯಾರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು ಆಲದೆ ಎರಡಣಿ ಹುದ್ದೆಲ್ಲ 287 ಆಹೆಗ್ಗೆ ನಿರಿಕ್ಷಕರ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು, 33 ಆಪಥಿಕ ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕ ಸೇವಾ ಆಯೋಗದಿಂದ ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಆರಂಭಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದರು. ಪೌರಸನ್ಮಾನ: ಸಚಿವರಾದ ನಂತರ ಮೊದಲ ಬಾರಿಗೆ ಮುಳಗುಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಆಗಮಿಸಿದ ಸಚಿವ ಎಸ್.ಆರ್.ಪಾಟೀ ಅವರನ್ನು ಮುಳಗುಂದ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ವತಿಂದ ಪೌರಸನ್ಮಾನ ಸಿಡಲಾಯಿತು. ಶಾಸಕ ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್.ಪಾಟೀಲ, ಮುಳಗುಂದ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಸಿ.ಬಿ.ಪಾಟೀಲ್, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ಜಿ.ಎಮ್.ಧನಂಜಯ ಅವರು ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.

ಹಾವೇರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗೆ ಇಂದು ಸಿದ್ದರಾಮಯ್ಯ

ಕನ್ನಡಪ್ರಭ ವಾರ್ತೆ, ಹಾವೇರಿ, ಸೆ.19

ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಉಪಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿ ಸಿದರಾಮಯ್ಯ ಅವರು ಸೆ.20 ರಂದು ಹಾವೇರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರವಾಸ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಪ್ರವಾಸ ಎಲ್ಲರ ಇಂತಿದೆ. ಉಪಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು ಅಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 8-20ಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಮಾನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿಗೆ ಆಗಮಿಸಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ನಂತರ ಅವರು ರಸ್ತೆ ಮಾರ್ಗವಾಗಿ ಹಾವೇರಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಹಿರೇಕೆರೂರಿಗೆ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11 45 ನಂಟಿಗೆ ಆಗಮಿಸಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಏರ್ಪಡಿಸಲಾದ ರೈತ ಯೋಧ ದಿನಾಚರಣೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಂದು ರಾತ್ರಿ 10-28ಕ್ಕೆ ಅವರು ರಸ್ತೆ ಮಾರ್ಗವಾಗಿ ರಾಣೆಬೆನ್ನೂರಿಗೆ ತೆರಳಿ, ಅಲ್ಲಿಂದ 11-35 ನಂಟಿಗೆ ಜಾಗ ಜಕ್ಷಮಾ ರೈಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಯಾಣ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಮೈಸೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ನಾಟಕೋತ್ಸವ

ಕನ್ನಡಪ್ರಭ ವಾರ್ತೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು, ಸೆ.19

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಜೀನು ಕೆಯ ಆ.7ರಿಂದ ಇರಿಂದ ನಗರದ ಕಲಾಮಂದಿರದಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ನಾಟಕೋತ್ಸವ ಏರ್ಪಾಡಾಗಿದೆ.

ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಇದೊಂದು ಜನ್ಯ ಕತಮಾಸೋತ್ಸವ ತೆರೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಿಮಲ್ಲ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಆಲಿಸಿದ ಈ ನಾಟಕೋತ್ಸವದಲ್ಲಿ ಜೆಗಳೂರು, ಬುಳ್ಳಾಪುರ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ, ಚಿಮಲೋಗ, ಮಾರವಾಡ, ಬೀದರ್‌ಲ, ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಾಲಕಳಾ ತಂಡದವರು ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ ನೀಡಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಎಂದು ಮೇಳದ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಎಸ್.ಪಾಪಣ್ಣ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪತ್ರಿಕಾಗೋಷ್ಠಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

ಉದ್ಘಾಟನೆಯ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಳ ಆಕ್ಕೃಯಂಗಳನ್ನೆ ಎಂ ಏನಗಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ರಚನಾ ಕಮ್ಮಟ. ಇಂದಿಲ್ 25-26 ರಂದು ಮೈಸೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಥಮ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನ ನಡೆಲಾಗುವುದು. ಸುಮಾರು ಎಂ ಸಾವಿರ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಪ್ರತಿಭಾಪಾಡ ರಂಗ ಸಡಲಾಗುವುದು. ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಹೇಳಿದರು.

ಮೇಳೆಯ ಬಾಲಾಸಾಹಿತ್ಯರ ಆಲಿಯಾ ಇದುವರೆಗೂ 14 ಪುಸ್ತಕಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲವನ್ನು ಸಂಗೀತ ನಾಟಕ ಅಕಾಡೆಮಿ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗೆ ಪಾತ್ರವಾಗಿವೆ. ಇದಲ್ಲದೆ ಕಾಲೇಜು ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆ, ಚಿತ್ರಕಲಾ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆ, ಕವನ ವಾಚನ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕುರಿತು ವಿಚಾರ ಸಂಕಿರಣ ಏರ್ಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಮಾಹಿತಿ ನೀಡಿದರು.

ಮೇಳೆಯ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಸಂಚಾಲಕರಾದ ಡಾ.ಬಿ.ಎಸ್. ಜಯಪ್ಪಗೌಡ, ಕೋಶಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಎಸ್.ಆರ್. ವಿಜಯಶಂಕರ್, ಸಂಚಾಲಕರಾದ ಡಾ.ಜೆ.ಸುಂದರಮೂರ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತಿತರರು ಇದ್ದರು.

OPPORTUNITY OF THE YEAR

Katwa Infotech Ltd. is a well established Healthcare BPO posting stable growth over the last 5 years employing a huge depository of talented Professionals. Katwa is now on a massive expansion spree and requires 100 dedicated and hard working individuals to join its workforce. Katwa also needs Software professionals on .NET Architecture. The prospective candidates must be Graduates / Diploma holders In any stream with proficiency in English and if selected, will undergo extensive training for 4 to 6 months before being absorbed as a **Medical Transcriptionist.**

If you are the one we are looking for then walk in on the **19th Sept. (Sunday) & 20th Sept. (Monday) 2004**

ಸುಖಮಯ ವಿವಾಹಿತ ಜೀವನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ನಿಶ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಮುಕ್ತರಾಗಿರಿ!



ವಿವಾಹದ ಮೊದಲು ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಸ್ವಪ್ನದೋಷ, ನರದೌರ್ಬಲ್ಯ, ಶೀಘ್ರಸ್ಖಲನ, ಮೂತ್ರದ ಉರಿ, ಮೂತ್ರನಾಳದ ಸೋಂಕು, ಮರ್ಮಾಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೊಕ್ಕು, ಬೆಳಗಿನ ಜಾವ ಮೂತ್ರ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿ ಬಳಲುತ್ತಿರುವ ಪುರುಷರಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಮಾಹಿತಿ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಕರೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅಥವಾ ಪತ್ರ ಬರೆಯಿರಿ. ಸೇವೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಡಾ.ಎಸ್.ಕೆ. ಪಾಟೀಲ್, ಪಾಟೀಲ್ ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕ್, ಪಾಟೀಲ್ ಕಾಂಪ್ಲೆಕ್ಸ್, ಬಸವೇಶ್ವರ ಸರ್ಕಲ್, ಬಸವೇಶ್ವರ ಮಂದಿರ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ. ಫೋನ್: (08354) 220 220

★ ಬಾಲಕೋಟ : ಪ.ತಿ.ತಿಂಗಳ 12 ಹಾಗೂ 28, 29ರಂದು ಮಾಗ್ ಮಾಸ, ಲಭ್ಯವಿರುತ್ತದೆ.
★ ಬಜಾಪೂರ : ಪ.ತಿ.ತಿಂಗಳ 14 ಹಾಗೂ 22 ರಂದು ಮೊಹಲ್ಲಾ ಅಲಿಪುರ ಮಾಸ್ಟರ್ ಮಾಸ್ಟರ್ ಮಾಸ್ಟರ್

ಕನ್ನಡಪ್ರಭ

ಸೋಮವಾರ 20 ಸೆಪ್ಟೆಂಬರ್ 2004

'ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳ'

ಕೆಳೆದ ಕೆಲವು ತಿಂಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಿತ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮ ವಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಚಾರ ಪಡೆದು ಚರ್ಚೆಗೆ ಗ್ರಾಸ ಒದಗಿಸಿರುವ ವಿಚಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ್ಯ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಎರಡು ವಿಷಯಗಳಿವೆ.

ಮೊದಲನೆಯೆದು, ಈಗಿನ ಉದ್ಯಮ ವಲಯದಲ್ಲೇ ಅತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ವೇತನದ ದ್ವೀಪದಂತಿರುವ ಬೈಟೆಕ್– ಸಾಫ್ಟ್‌ವೇರ್ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪುರುಷರ ಸಮಕ್ಕೂ ಹಗಲೂ – ರಾತ್ರಿ ದುಡಿಯುವ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕರು ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ವಿಷಯಗಳ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಂದ ಪ್ರಭ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯತ್ತ ವಾಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದು. ಈ ವಿಷಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಈಗ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ಚರ್ಚೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ವೈಜ್ಞಾನಿಕ – ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಸಮೀಕ್ಷೆಯ ಆಧಾರವಿಲ್ಲ. ಎಲ್ಲ ಬಗೆಯ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯದ ಪ್ರಕಟನೆಗೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಅನಿಸಿಕೆಯೇ ಆಧಾರ.

ಈ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ದೂರು ಕೊಡುವವರೂ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ, ಈ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿಯಿಂದ (ಅದು ವ್ಯಾಪಕವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ) ಆ ಉದ್ಯಮದ ದಕ್ಷತೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಕೆಟ್ಟ ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಆತಂಕದಿಂದ ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿತ್ತೇನೋ.

ಇಂತಹ ವಿಚಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕರಿಗೆ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಗಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಕುತೂಹಲವೆರಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಸತ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಈ ವಿಷಯ ಕುರುತಂತೆ ಯಾರೂ ಸಂಪಏಯ ಗಮನವನ್ನು ಸೆಳೆಯಬೇಕಾಗಿಲ್ಲ.

ಆದರೆ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುವ ಎಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉದ್ಯೋಗಸ್ಥ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳ ಕೊಡುವುದು ವ್ಯಾಪಕವಾಗಿದೆ, ಈ ಪಿಡುಗಿನ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಸೂಕ್ತ ಕ್ರಮ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುವ ವಿಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಸಂಘಟನೆಗಳ ಆಂದೋಲನಗಳೇ ನಡೆದಿವೆ. ಸ್ಥಿರ ಪುರುಷರಿಬ್ಬರೂ ಒಂದೇ ಕಡೆ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡಬೇಕಾದ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ, ಪುರುಷ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರಿಗಿಗೆ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯ ದೈಹಿಕ – ಮಾನಸಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳ ನೀಡುವುದು ತಮ್ಮ "ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಹಕ್ಕು" ಎಂದೇ ಅನೇಕರು ಭಾವಿಸಿರುವಂತಿದೆ.

ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ತಮ್ಮ "ಕೈಕೆಳಗೆ" ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುವ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರನ್ನು ಕೀಳಾಗಿ ನೋಡುವುದು, ಅವರಿಂದ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಸುಖವನ್ನು ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸುವುದು ಅಥವಾ ಅವರನ್ನು ಚುಡಾಯಿಸಿ, ಗೋಳುಗುಟ್ಟಿಸಿ ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಚಿತ್ರ ವಾದ ಸಂತೋಷವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುವುದು ಈಗಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರೂಪವೇನೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಪ್ರತಿನಿತ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳಿಂದ ಹಿಡಿದು ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳವರೆಗೆ ಈ ಸಂಬಂಧದ ದೂರುಗಳನ್ನು ಕುರಿತ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವರದಿಗಳು ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುತ್ತವೆ.

ಈಗಲೂ ಇಂತಹ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷಿಯ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ (ಜುಡಾಯಿಸುವುದು, ಕೆಟ್ಟ ರೀತಿಯ ಆಶ್ಲೀಲ ಜೋಕುಗಳನ್ನು ಗುಟ್ಟುಯಾಗಿ ಹೇಳುವುದು. ಆಶ್ಲೀಲ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿಸುವುದು) ಕಿಕ್ಕಾರ್ಹ ಆಪರಾಧವೇ. ಆದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾಯಿದೆ ಇಲ್ಲ. 1997 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಕರಣದಲ್ಲಿ ತೀರ್ಪು ನೀಡುವಾಗ ಸುಪ್ರೀಂ ಕೋರ್ಟ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶಿ ಸೂತ್ರಗಳನ್ನೇ ಕಾಯಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಅಂಗೀಕರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಆದರೆ ಇಂತಹ ಅಪರಾಧಕ್ಕೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯಾಗಿರುವುದು ತುಂಬಾ ಅಪರೂಪ. ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳೇನೋ ದಾಖಲಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅವುಗಳ ತನಿಖೆಗೆ ಸೂಕ್ತ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಇಲ್ಲ. ತಾರ್ಕಿಯ ವಿಧಿ– ನಿಯಮಗಳೂ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದಲೇ ಆರೋಪಿಗಳು ಸುಲಭವಾಗಿ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಂಡುಬಿಡುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ಈ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯ ನಿವಾರಣೆಗೆ ಈಗ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಆಯೋಗ, ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳವನ್ನು ತಪ್ಪಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಆ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿಗೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆ ವಿಧಿಸುವ ವಿಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಕರಡು ಮಸೂದೆಯನ್ನು ಸಿದ್ಧಪಡಿಸಿ, ಅದನ್ನು ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಮಂತ್ರಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದೆ.

ಸುಪ್ರೀಂ ಕೋರ್ಟಿನ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶಿ ಸೂತ್ರಗಳ ಹಿಂದಿರುವ ಚಿಂತನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಆಯೋಗ ದೇಶದ ಅನೇಕ ಕಡೆಗಳಿಂದ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದ ಸಾಕ್ಷ್ಯದ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಕಾಂಟ್ರಕ್ಟ ಪಂಚತರ ಸಲಹೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದು ತಯಾರಾಗಿರುವ ಈ ಕರಡು ಮಸೂದೆಯನ್ನು ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ-ಮಂತ್ರಾಲಯ ಒಪ್ಪಿದರೆ ಸಂಸತ್ತಿನ ಮುಂದಿನ ಅಧಿವೇಶನದಲ್ಲೇ ಅದು ಕಾಯಿದೆಯಾಗಿ ಪರಿವರ್ತನೆಯಾಗಬಹುದು.

ಆಗ ಮಾಲಿಕರಿಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಡಳಿತವರ್ಗಕ್ಕೆ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳದ ದೂರುಗಳನ್ನು ಪರೀಕ್ಷಾರಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಆಗತ್ಯವಾದ ವಿಧಿ– ನಿಯಮಗಳು, ಕಾಯಿದೆಯ ಬೆಂಬಲ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿಂತೆ ಆಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸುಪ್ರೀಂ ಕೋರ್ಟಿನ ಆದೇಶದಂತೆ ಈಗಲೂ 50 ಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ನೌಕರರಿರುವ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ದೂರುಗಳ ಪರಿಶೀಲನಾ ಸಮಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೇಮಿಸ ಬೇಕು. ಮಹಿಳಾ ಆಯೋಗದ ಅನುಭವದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಪ್ರೀಂ ಕೋರ್ಟಿನ ಈ ಸೂತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬಹುತೇಕ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಅಲಕ್ಷಿಸಿವೆ. ಕರಡು ಕಾಯಿದೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂತಹ ಅಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವನ್ನು ಶಿಕ್ಷಾರ್ಹ ಆಪರಾಧವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿದೆ.

ಸಹಜವಾಗಿಯೇ ಇಂತಹ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಯಿದೆಯ ನಿಯಮಗಳ ದುರುಪಯೋಗವಾಗುವ ಆತಂಕವಂತೂ ಅನೇಕರಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದೇ ಇದೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಭಾಸಗಿ ವಿಚಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾರೋ ಒಬ್ಬರು ದೂರು ನೀಡಿದರೆ ಅಂತಹ ಘಟನೆ ನಡೆಯಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ರುಜುವಾತುಪಡಿಸುವುದು ಕಷ್ಟ. ನಡೆಯದ ಘಟನೆಗೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷ್ಯವನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲಿಂದ ತರುವುದು?

ಈ ಆಂಶಗಳ ಕಡೆಗೂ ಕರಡು ಕಾಯಿದೆ ಗಮನ ಹರಿಸಿ, ಲೈಂಗಿಕ ಕಿರುಕುಳ ದುರಾಗಳ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಪರಿಹಾರಾಂಶಕ್ಕೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೂ ಪಾತ್ರವಿರಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಮಹಿಳಾ ಆಯೋಗದ ಅನಿಸಿಕೆ.

ಸೂಕ್ತಿ

ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಹಾಕಿದವನು ಐದು ನಿಮಿಷದವರೆಗೆ ಮೂರ್ಖನಾಗಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ.
ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯೇ ಹಾಕದವನು ಜೀವನ ಪರ್ಯಂತ ಮೂರ್ಖನಾಗಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ.
ಚೈನಾ ದೇಶದ ಗಾದೆ.

ದಲಿತರೊಳಗಿರುವ ನವಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಿಕೆ ಅಳಿಯುವುದೆಂದು?

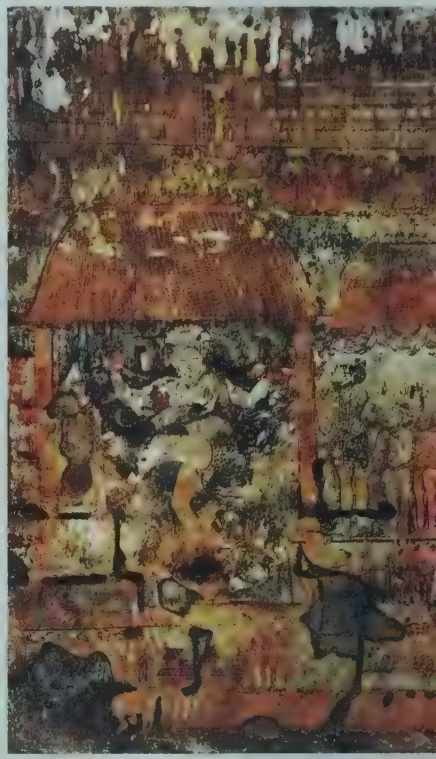
ತುಮಕೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕೂತುಕಕ್ಕೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಬಿಪಾಣ್ಯಗಳ ಪುರ ಎಂಬ ಹಳ್ಳಿಯ ಮೇಲ್ಜಾತಿಯ ಜನರು ದಲಿತರ ಕೇರಿಯ ಗಂಡು ನಾಯಿಗಳು ಅವರ ಹೆಣ್ಣು ನಾಯಿಗಳ ಜೊತೆ ಸೇರುವುದರ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಸಾಮೂಹಿಕ ಬಹಿಷ್ಕಾರ ಹಾಕಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಮಾನವ ಹಕ್ಕುಗಳ ರಂಗ ಬಹಿರಂಗಗೊಳಿಸಿದೆ. ದಲಿತರನ್ನು ಮಾನವರೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸದಿರುವ ಜನರಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳಿಗೆ ದಯೆ, ಪ್ರಾಣ್ಯಿಗಳು ಬರುವುದಾದರೂ ಹೇಗೆ? ಈ ದೇಶದ ಜನರಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅವರ ರಕ್ತಗತ ಸ್ವಭಾವವೆಂದು ವಿಷಾದಿಸಬಹುದು. ದಶ್ಚೇ. ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಸುದ್ದಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾದ ಬೆನ್ನ ಹಿಂದೆ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಕ್ರಿಯಾ ಸಮಿತಿ, ದಲಿತ ಆಕ್ಕ ಕಛೇರಿಗಳ ಮೇಲೂರು ಅವಲೋಕನ ಚರ್ಚಾಗೂಷ್ಠಿಯ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಅವನಗ ಡಾ. ಏದ್ದಲಿಂಗಯ್ಯ ಅವರ 'ಊರುಕೇರಿ', ಡಾ। ಆರವಿಂದ ಮಾಲಗತ್ತಿ ಅವರ 'ಗೌರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ', ತುಂಬಾಡಿ ರಾಮಯ್ಯ ಅವರ 'ಮಣೇಗಾರ', ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ್ ಅವರ 'ಸಂಬೋಗ' ಹಾಗೂ ರು. ಸರಸ್ವತಿ ಅವರ 'ಈಗೇನ್ ಮಾಡಿರಿ' ಎಂಬ ಏಟು ಕಥೆಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಪ್ರಬುದ್ಧರು ಆವರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿದಷ್ಟನ್ನು ಸಾದರಪಡಿಸಿದರು. ಈ ನಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಸವಾದರ ಸಾಕಾರಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಶ್ರಮಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ವಿರ ಭದ್ರ ಚನ್ನಮಲ್ಲಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳು ಆವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿವು ಗೋಚಾಗ ಪರಂಪರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಬಿಚ್ಚಿಡುವ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಬದ್ಧತೆಗಳಾಗಿವೆ ಎಂದರೆ. ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆ ವಿ. ಸಿದ್ದ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಪೊಲೀಸ್ ಮಹಾನಿರೀಕ್ಷಕರಾದ ಸುಬಾಷ್ ಭರಣಿ ಆಲೆಕ್ಕ್ಸಂದರ 'ರೂಟ್ಸ್'ನಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ವರ್ಣ ಭೇದದ ಗಂಭೀರ ಸಂಗತಿ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಲೆ; ಮಹಾರಾಷ್ಟ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದ ಬಹುತೇಕ ಆತ್ಮಕಥೆಗಳು ಶಾಶ್ವತ ನೆಲೆಯಿರದ ಆಲಿಮಾರಿ ಜನಾಂಗದ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲರು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆಂದು ಅಭಿಮತಿಸಿದರು.

ಆದರೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಈ ಏದು ಆತ್ಮಕಥನಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಮೂಲ ಆಸ್ಪೃಶ್ಯರಾದ ಹೊಲೆಯ– ಮಾದಿಗರೇ ಬರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ವಿಧಾನಸೌಧದ ಸುತ್ತ–ಮುತ್ತಲ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಸಿಲವ ಸಾಹಿತಿಗಳೇ ಬರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎಂದು ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಿಸಿದರು. ಅವರು ಈ ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ಇವೆರೆಡೂ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಆಪರಂಪೆ ಬಿದ್ದು–ಕಲಿತು ಉತ್ತಮ ಸ್ಥಾನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವವರಿಗೆ ನೀಡಿ ಒಪಿಸಿ ಮರೆತಿರುವ ಅವರ ಸ್ಮೃತಿಯ ವಾಸನೆಯನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೆ ನೆನಪಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಆಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ ಎಂದರು. ಈ ಒಟ್ಟೆಗಲ್ಲಲ್ಲಿ ಆಯಾಸವೇಯವಾಗಿ ಕೋಡಿಗೆಯ ಕಾಲ್ಪಳಿತಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿ ನಜ್ಜುಗುಜ್ಜಾಗಿರುವ ಈ ಜಗದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ನವಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸಿ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧಿಸಲಿರುವ ಮತ್ತು ಅವರೆಲ್ಲರಿಗಿರುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯ ನಡೆದಿದೆ.

ಈ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅಸ್ಪೃಶ್ಯತೆಯ ನಿರ್ಲಜ್ಜ ಮತ್ತು ಅಮಾನವೀಯ ರೂಪ ನಡೆಸಲಿಕೆಗಳ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿ ಬಳವಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಯಾಗಿ ಧ್ವನಗೂಡಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಆಧುನಿಕ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಇತಿಹಾಸ ದಲ್ಲಿ ಪೆರಿಯಾರ್, ಜ್ಯೋತಿಭಾವುಲೆ, ಡಾ। ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ಇವರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅಸ್ಪೃಶ್ಯತೆಯ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಸಿಡಿದೆದ್ದು ಶಾಶ್ವತ ಪರಿಹಾರಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹೋರಾಡಿದವರು. ಆದರೆ ಅಸಹಜ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನಿರಂತರ ಚಿಂತನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಮಹಾನ್ ಚೇತನ ಡಾ। ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ಅವರಿಗಿರುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯ







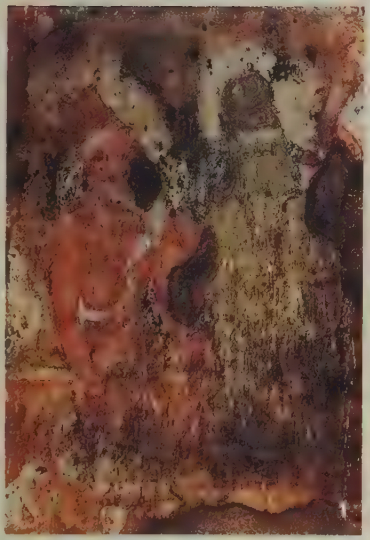
king Raja Raja I built the Brihadisvara temple between AD 1000 and AD 1008 and the paintings were done between AD 1008 and AD 1012.

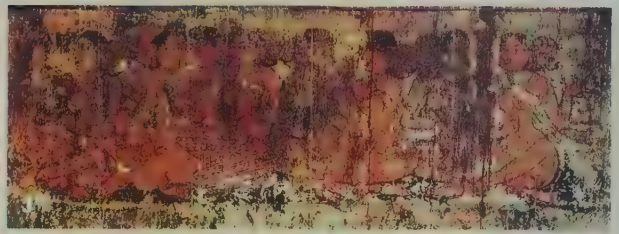
If most visitors had hitherto no access to these paintings because of their location, they can now relish the paintings' exact photographic reproductions, which are on display at the newly opened Interpretation Centre on the temple premises. The photographs measure nine feet by six feet.

The credit for photographing the murals in exact detail, capturing their texture and colour, goes to the team comprising Dr. T. Satyamurthy, who was Superintending Archaeologist, ASI, Chennai Circle, when the project was executed; P.S. Sriraman, Assistant Superintending Archaeologist; and N. Thyagarajan, artist and photographer.

The four paintings depict Siva as Dakshinamurthy, the story of Tamil Saivite saint Sundarar, Siva as Tripurantaka, and Raja Raja Chola and his family worshipping Nataraja (Siva) at the Chidambaram temple. The paintings, rich in detail, offer a lot of historical information. While all the frescoes in the Brihadisvara temple together

JUNE 1, 2007



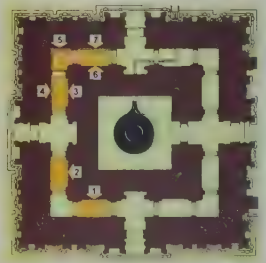








1. Rishi and Rishikumara in the Dakshinamurthy panel.
2. Village elders reading a document in the Sundarar panel.
3. Royal ladies in the Nataraja panel.
5. Vishnu in the Kalyanasundaramurthi panel, in the Ajanta tradition.
6. A demon and his consort in the Tripurantaka panel.
The fourth (Raja Raja worshipping the Linga) and the seventh (Ravana at Kailasa) panels, though exposed, have not yet been documented.



WHERE THE PANELS are found in the passage around the sanctum sanctorum.

occupy 660 square metres, these four paintings alone take up 110 sq m.

Photographing the murals was extremely difficult because they are painted on both walls of the dark, dingy and narrow passage, which has no ventilation. The space between the two walls is less than seven feet, so there is not much space for the photographer to step back and capture images. Since the paintings are 15 feet tall, one must crane one's neck to look at the top portions. Most visitors are not allowed to see these paintings because of the narrowness of the passage and the poor light and ventilation.

Satyamurthy said: "The ASI, Chennai Circle, therefore, undertook a project to photograph the murals, prepare photographic reproductions and display them in almost their true size and original colours. This effort required special techniques because of paucity of space, poor lighting and the enormous size of the murals. They had to be photographed in many small frames and then joined to make one frame. This effort needed high skill."

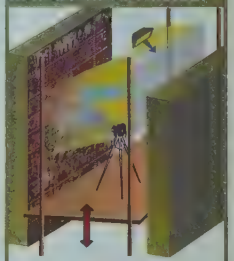
Sriraman said: "What is seen in the paintings is seen in the frames. We have assembled the photographs without loss of perspective. Anybody can see the paintings in their original dimensions in our photographs." He explained why the ASI decided to go public with the paintings: "Documentation is important because people of the next generation should know that these paintings existed. Recopying is important. In photography, you get accurate reproduction."

What prompted Satyamurthy and Sriraman to get the murals photographed was that while a number of books had been written about the Ajanta and Ellora paintings and research done on them, there was virtually no publication on the Chola paintings in the Brihadisvara temple.

It was in 1931 that these four, and other, murals in the temple were discovered by S.K. Govindaswami of Tamil Nadu. He wrote to *The Hindu* about it. The relevant news item in *The Hindu* of April 11, 1931, reads:

"Thousand years old Chola frescoes

How the camera moved



THE location was a nightmare. There was not enough light and space, and use of harsh lights was taboo. How to take photographs of the top portions of the murals?

The ASI men rigged up a platform that moved up and down like a lift. "The platform from which the photographs were taken had to move parallel to the panel. The lighting from the top to the bottom had to be uniform," said P.S. Sriraman, Assistant Superintending Archaeologist, ASI. There was a space of only six feet between the paintings and the camera.

Reported discovery in Tanjore Big Temple

Mr. S.K. Govindaswami, M.A., Annamalai University, writes to us under date 10th instant:–

Close upon the discovery of the Pallava paintings in the Kailasanathaswami Temple at Conjeevaram by the French savant, the indefatigable Prof. Jouveau Dubreuil, it has been my great good fortune to bring to light the hitherto unknown frescoes of the Imperial Chola period, in the Brihadeswaraswami Temple, popularly known as 'The Big Temple of Tanjore'."

When Govindaswami visited the temple in 1930, he found "in the dim religious light of a small oil lamp... the existence of some kind of paintings on

The murals, each 15 feet tall and 10 feet wide, could not be shot in single frames. Each painting was shot in 40 to 50 frames, which were then assembled in a computer. Poor **lighting was just one of the factors** that made the work difficult.

IN a remarkable feat performed in the face of overwhelming odds, two officers of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and a young photographer have photographed in minute detail four huge frescoes found in the Brihadisvara temple in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. What makes their work all the more creditable is the difficult location of the murals, their enormous size and their reflecting surface, all of which posed big challenges.

The murals, each 15 feet tall and 10 feet wide (4.5 metres x 3 metres), are about 1,000 years old. They are located in the narrow and dark passage around the temple's sanctum sanctorum. The great Chola





CAPTURING THE MAGNIFICENCE. (Above) A single-frame, out-of-perspective picture of the mural depicting Siva as Nataraja (Extreme right) A montage gives a more accurate reproduction of the mural. (Left) The passage around the sanctum sanctorum where the murals were found.

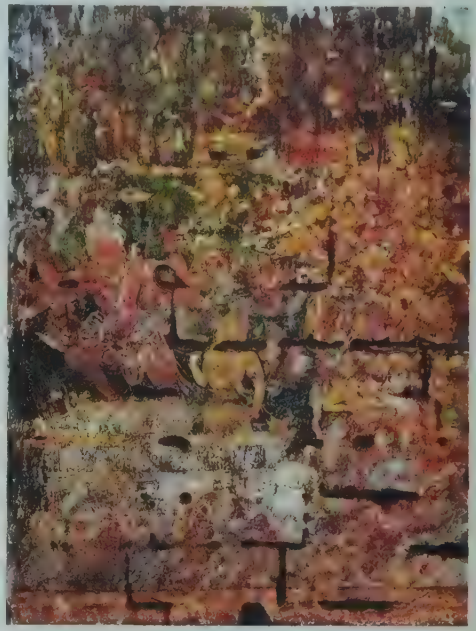
the walls on either side of a dark, narrow circumambulatory passage around the sanctum sanctorum".

When he returned to the temple in 1931 and examined the place thoroughly with the help of a "Baby Petromax", he found that the bright light indeed revealed paintings. "But paintings of an undoubtedly very late and degenerate age, whose linear contortions and chromatic extravagances shattered in a moment all my wonderful dreams of discovering there the best and the only example of the art of Chola mural paintings. Still I chose a part of the western wall for close inspection and found the painted plastering there cracked all over and threatening to fall down. A gentle touch and the whole mass crumbled down, exposing underneath a fine series of frescoes palpitating with the life of the other days."

Govindaswami went on to describe the paintings in his letter to *The Hindu*, adding: "The discovery of these paintings is of great importance to the history of South Indian art. Hitherto, the Pallavas held exclusively the palm for mural paintings in the Tamil country. The Cholas may now be believed to divide the honours equally with the Pallavas not only in the South Indian architecture and sculpture but also in South Indian painting. For I have little doubt, judging from the excellence of the drawings, the colour scheme and the fresco-technique, that these paintings belong to the best period of Chola rule, to the glorious reign of Raja Raja the Great, and contemporary with the building of the Great Temple at Tanjore."

The paintings with "linear contortions and chromatic extravagances" of the "very late and degenerate age", which covered the Chola murals before Govindaswami discovered the latter, were those of the Nayakas and were done in the 16th and 17th centuries.

In terms of the area they occupy, the Chola paintings in the Brihadisvara temple rank next only to the Buddhist paintings at Ajanta in Maharashtra. While the murals at Ajanta come under the tempera variety, those



SIVA AS TRIPURANTAKA, who subdued the three demons.. (Facing page) The story of Sundarar, the Tamil Saivite saint.

at the Big Temple are called frescoes. The artists at Ajanta applied a coat of plaster on the wall of the caves and did the paintings after the plaster dried up. The paintings survive to this day because the painting material holds together the pigment in it and the plaster.

But the Chola-age artists used a more difficult technique at the Brihadisvara temple. They applied lime plaster on the wall and painted the murals on the plaster while it was still wet. This demanded that they should do the sketches and complete the painting before the lime plaster dried up. This is not easy given the humidity conditions in Tamil Nadu. In this technique, the paintings formed part and parcel of the thin lime plaster. Sriraman said, "Here both the plaster and the painting integrate together. The frescoes are, therefore, more durable but their execution is very difficult."

In the 1960s, Subbaraman, the Superintending Chemist of the ASI, discovered a technique by which he stripped the Nayaka paintings that covered the Chola paintings in such a way that the Nayaka paintings, too, could be saved. Subbaraman removed the Nayaka paintings and pasted them on another mount.

When Satyamurthy and Sriraman contacted Thyagarajan about photographing the Chola frescoes, he accepted the assignment because of the challenges that the work presented.



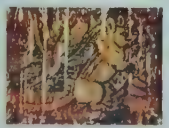














THE BANYAN TREE

Photographic feat

The inaccessible Chola murals at the Big Temple in Thanjavur have been captured in almost life-size photographs and displayed at the temple. BY T.S. SUBRAMANIAN



THE BRIHADISVARA TEMPLE in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.

US may retain 'physical custody' of Saddam

Washington: The United States is considering giving "legal custody" of Saddam Hussein to the new Iraqi interim government while retaining "physical custody" in the hands of the US military.

If Iraq's new Prime Minister asks for the custody of the deposed leader, the United States intends to transfer legal custody of the former president, US occupation administrator L Paul Bremer said.But he indicated that the US military would continue to retain physical custody of Hussein until the Iraqi government has an appropriate detention facility to hold him. "If they ask for him, which I have every reason to believe they will ... We'll turn him over," Bremer was quoted as saying by The Washington Post on Tuesday.

He added, however, that "legal custody and physical custody can be two separate things.""The interim Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi, has been discussing the handover of Hussein with US occupation authorities, although it was not clear whether he is seeking physical as well as legal custody of Hussein and other imprisoned Iraqi leaders. US officials said physical turnover of prisoners is likely to come much later than June 30 because of the shaky security situation caused by a relentless insurgency against the US occupation, the Post reported.

President George W Bush said on Tuesday that Hussein and other senior figures of his Baath Party government will be turned over to Iraqi custody only when "appropriate security" is in place.

By giving Iraq legal, but not physical, custody of Hussein, the US and Iraqi governments could achieve a deal that is in the best interests of both nations, a senior US official involved in the process said.

"If the United States retained legal custody of Hussein, who has been classified by the US government as a prisoner of war, it could prompt challenges from human rights groups and Hussein's lawyers". Agencies

AP



Iraqi firefighters try to extinguish a smouldering oil pipeline north of Faw on Tuesday after explosions ripped through two oil pipelines in southern Iraq

Oil exports stop

Baghdad: Saboteurs attacked two key southern oil pipelines for a second day on Wednesday, cutting off all crude oil exports from the southern route in Iraq, officials said.

The latest attack in Basra occurred just after midnight, said Samir Jassim, a senior official of the state-run Southern Oil Company. He said it would take at least a week to repair the two pipelines. AP

Iran trying to bully UN nuclear watchdog: US

Vienna: Iran is trying to bully the board of the UN nuclear watchdog by threatening to resume the enrichment of uranium, the US ambassador to the United Nations in Vienna said on Wednesday.



M Khatami

"What we're seeing is intimidation by the government of Iran and its delegation here," ambassador Kenneth Brill told reporters.

The United States suspects Iran of developing nuclear weapons under cover of a civilian atomic energy programme, which Iran denies. "People who are trying to produce electricity for lightbulbs don't engage in this kind of behaviour," he said.

Brill was responding to Iran's reaction to a draft resolution of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) governing board proposed by France, Britain and Germany that "deplores" Iran's less- than-total cooperation with the IAEA.

"If this resolution passes, Iran will have no moral commitment to suspend uranium enrichment," Iranian President Mohammad Khatami told reporters in Tehran earlier. Iran agreed last year with Europe's big three to suspend enrichment in exchange for peaceful nuclear technology.

On Monday, IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said Iran's cooperation with the IAEA probe has been "less than satisfactory." Brill said, Iran was trying "to take a resolution that, while not perfect, is clearly based on (ElBaradei's) statement on Monday and based on the (latest IAEA Iran) report and to try to get the board to abdicate its responsibility."

Meanwhile in Brussels, the European Union said, "we want Iran to take its place in the international community. But full compliance and cooperation with the IAEA are crucial". Reuters

Australian wins BBC literary award

London: The Australian author of the book 'Stasiland: Stories From Behind The Berlin Wall' won Britain's richest literary prize for nonfiction on Tuesday.

In her first book, writer Anna Funder, a former lawyer and television producer, unearths "extraordinary tales from the underbelly" of the former East Germany, said the judges who awarded her the USD 59,000 2004 Samuel Johnson prize for nonfiction, which is sponsored by the British Broadcasting Corp.



Anna Funder

She defeated best-selling American author Bill Bryson and four other writers who had been shortlisted for the prize, which celebrates originality and diversity in contemporary nonfiction publishing. Funder, who lives in Sydney, visits the man who painted the line that became the Berlin wall, meets the woman accused of potentially sparking a conflict by trying to cross the border, and gets drunk with the 'mik jegger' of the east. AP

Islamist website shows American hostage's video

Dubai: A video purportedly from a branch of Al Qaida and released on an Islamist Internet site shows a US hostage, Paul Marshall Johnson, who the group has threatened to execute.

The group demands that its militants being detained in Saudi Arabia be released within 72 hours.

The hostage, a 49-year-old aviation engineer, was shown blindfolded with a piece of white fabric and tape. He was wearing a red shirt torn in parts so a tattoo on his left shoulder became visible.

a balaclava and a belt containing explosives, then introduced himself as Abdel Aziz Al-Muqrin, leader of an "Al Qaida in the Ara-

AFP



A grab from a video released on Tuesday on an Islamist website shows Paul Marshall Johnson blindfolded

bian peninsula" group.

He read a long state-

MISSING PERSON



Subject to a petition dated 04th March 2003 by the public prosecutor, Mrs Anne Perrier, is asking Lyon Magistrates High Court to declare as missing her son, **Jean Jacques Perrier, born in Bron, 69130, France on 29th August 1956.** He is a French national last residing at 38 rue des Sources in Ecully, 69130, France, who has not returned to his home or been in touch since January 1977.

At that time, he was in Goa, India coming to the end of a long journey and he was preparing to return to France.

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EDIT PAGE

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman.

— Margaret Thatcher

Women's Worth

Why Chidambaram should present a gender-just budget

Spend, spend, spend — P Chidambaram's famous words while presenting his maiden budget in his earlier avatar as finance minister. We couldn't agree more with the FM, but perhaps he could spread his largesse around a bit more this time around, especially in relation to women. When a group of women activists met him recently to discuss gender budgeting, Chidambaram must have been shocked to learn that benefits to women have declined from a dismal 1.02 per cent of public expenditure in 1998-99 to an abysmal 0.87 per cent in 2001-02. In short, the previous NDA government's tall claims on 40 per cent allocation of all resources to be used for the benefit of women were simply not implemented. In election after election, we have seen political parties go out of their way to woo the woman voter. Yet, the political establishment turns notoriously reluctant when it comes to actually doing something to better the lot of half the population. Women are shortchanged in every field. Recent estimates from the ministry of rural development show that less than 20 per cent of women are beneficiaries of government employment schemes. Women's groups rightly seek that this figure should be at least 40 per cent. Women need governmental protection all the more since at least 90 per cent of the female workforce is in the unorganised sector.

Chidambaram would be doing a signal service for the cause of gender justice by recommending the creation of a women's credit fund. It is all very fine for the common minimum programme to promise 100 days of work for every rural and urban household, but it must ensure that women, especially single women and women-headed households, are not left out of the loop. Of course, efforts to improve the conditions for women must begin at the primary school level by kick-starting the mid-day meal scheme. All studies show that it is the single most important factor in attracting girls to enrol and stay in schools. In addition, the FM needs to take a close look at the appalling neglect of the budgetary allocation for women's health — Indian women suffer the most crippling debilities while having to bear a disproportionate burden of household work. The wish list is endless — violence against women is another area which needs to be tackled, and so is food security. It was on a woman's shoulders that the new government rode to victory. Surely, the FM should not be found wanting in attending to the needs of his government's massive gender constituency.

Congress grapples with organisational revival

Keep party separate from the government

A Congress-led coalition has been voted to power in New Delhi. But does that mean all is fine with the party? Take a look at Verdict 2004. The Congress improved its tally from 114 in 1999 to 145. But the figure pales into insignificance when compared with the tallies the party mustered in the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. There is hardly any sign of the party regaining its influence in the Hindi

Iqbal's Inquest

Reconciling Islam with Modern Science

By Javid Iqbal

The English lectures of Mohammad Iqbal — *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* — are commonly known as the Six Lectures or the Madras Lectures. Delivered in 1929, these lectures articulate Iqbal's views on a key contemporary dilemma facing the Muslim community: How to reinterpret Islamic thought in the light of modern experience.

The poet-philosopher believed that Indian Muslims, while unable to help Islamic countries politically, had a vital role to play in the ideological and intellectual fields. Central to this project, he felt, was the revival of Islamic science, which alone could restore the broken link between Islam and modern sciences, thereby helping Muslims to progress in the fields of science and technology.

Engaging with the intellectual and scientific legacy of Europe didn't mean the acceptance or imitation of any un-Islamic or alien learning; on the contrary, it was the re-adoption of those values which the Muslims had handed over to the Europeans in their own time of wakefulness; an inheritance which the latter had built on unlike the Muslims who lapsed into deep slumber. Iqbal believed that the texture of scholastic Islamic theology or *ilm-e Kalam*, which was rooted in Greek speculative sciences, had broken down and required reconstruction.



Another important issue for Iqbal was the reconstruction of Islamic Law (*fiqh*). This, he argued, was only possible through *ijtihad* (juridical conclusion). But because of the traditional conservatism of the Muslim world, and particularly that of the Indian ulema, this had become a fraught and sensitive issue. Iqbal had already been dubbed a blasphemer (*kafir*) by some people for airing his views on the subject. However, he wanted to continue his investigation and research for a new methodology of ijtihad which was in accordance with the demands and requirements of the changed times.

In his lectures, Iqbal argued for the study for theology in the light of modern scientific thought, so as to strengthen the faith of believers. Mullahs may term such Muslims "westernised" but Iqbal was clearly unimpressed by the conservative rhetoric.

Furthermore, Iqbal desired to reconstruct Islamic law or Shariah according to the needs and requirements of modern times. Only religious obligations or *ibaadat*, he argued, were beyond the law of change since they constituted the rights of God. But mundane or worldly matters (*muamalaat*) relate to the rights of the people and are subject to change and modification. Indeed, it was necessary to modify these rights through a continuous process of ijtihad so as to meet the requirements of changing times. His advice was unequivocal: Muslims should not let themselves be exploited by the semi-literate Mullah. Iqbal encouraged Muslims to engage with serious writings rather than waste time on outmoded political and cultural matters and sensational press releases.

Why is it not possible to propagate modern education among Indian Muslims in keeping with Iqbal's teachings? Should the religious learning centres (*dini madaaris*) of the Muslims not merge with secular educational institutions, in the process doing away with the separate identities of, say, Aligarh Muslim University and Nadwatul Ulema? And wouldn't this be a true and practical embodiment of the principle of "unity" (*wahdat*) in our educational life. The Dars-e Nizaami of the dini madaaris is an old method of education. It has nothing to do with ibaadat and is mainly concerned with muamalaat. Can we not change it in order to suit the present day requirements?

There are several aspects of the Muslim Personal Law, which require reinterpretation. In the past, this was done in two ways. First, through the judiciary. In Pakistan, for example, the court has put the right of *khula* (dissolution of a marriage by the woman) on par with that of *talaq* (divorce on a man's initiative). And second, by way of legislation. A commission of Ulema and experts could be set up to examine different legal problems and make recommendations, which can then form the basis for personal law reforms.

The point is this: The revival of Iqbal's thought is essential for the Muslims of both India and Pakistan, albeit for different reasons. If Iqbal's ideas could be presented in a simple manner, the Muslim masses stand to benefit enormously. Iqbal's lectures, addressed as they are to a new generation of Muslims, are a convenient starting point. Although they were delivered and published before the Partition, the motivation behind them — how do Muslims embrace modernity without losing their religious identity? — remains as relevant as ever.

Following the creation of Pakistan, the status of Indian Muslims is that of a minority, but they are the largest among a host of other minority groups in a society dominated by the Hindu majority. The political leadership in India is fully aware that the promotion of secularism is indispensable for the unity and integrity of the Indian nation. It wouldn't perhaps be wrong to say that if some Indian Muslims are economically prosperous today, it is thanks entirely to India's secularism. Therefore, the Muslims of India must extend their wholehearted support to secularism in its right form. This attitude is not only essential for their cultural and economic survival but also in consonance with the demands of nationalism and patriotism.

(The author, son of poet-philosopher Iqbal, is a supreme court judge in Pakistan.)

Love's Lost Labour

*At 78, **Piara Singh Khabra** is the oldest MP in the British House of Commons. He is also one of the longest-serving Asian MPs. Just weeks ago, Khabra made headlines because he was evicted from his telegenic Commons' seat right behind the British PM. But, he tells **Rashmee Z Ahmed** that wasn't racism. Real racism is something else again and he claims it exists within the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP):*

You've been in the news because you were alleged to have been turfed out of your very telegenic Commons seat. Tell us about it?

It became news not just because I was asked to leave the seat. But because this country's anti-Labour (Party) media is always on the lookout for something. I was asked to leave. I wasn't thrown out. It was just before Prime Minister's Questions. The chamber was packed. The assistant chief whip came up to me and said would you mind vacating this seat. I said why. He said because we want a woman to sit there because there's been a survey that Labour is losing support among women voters. I said, I totally disagree with you. The Labour Party has more than 100 women MPs and it is wrong to trivialise politics. I don't think that the women in the country will start supporting Labour just because you have a few women sitting behind the PM.

How long have you occupied that particular seat?

Since 1992.

So, why did this happen to you? You're alleged to have said you were 'victimised' because you are 'old' and 'Asian'.

I don't think that's true. I never said that. I wasn't victimised. But I disagreed on a very important political issue — that you cannot trivialise politics. If women voters aren't happy with Labour, it's important to address those issues. One shouldn't challenge the intelligence of women voters by putting women behind the PM. I disagree with spin politics. It's a cheap sort of way to address an issue. But I was not victimised because I was old or Asian.

Do you think this issue would have got the sort of attention it has if you weren't an Asian Labour MP?

The impression has been created by a section of the media that the Labour Party does this sort of thing to people who are old and Asian. As far as ethnic minority rights are concerned, the Labour Party has done a lot. The party's policy on the issue of discrimination is very clear. The party is very progressive in tackling the issue of racism. They have changed the laws, rules and regulations to make sure that ethnic minorities are not discriminated against in employment, promotion. But can they stop individuals? Even here (in Parliament), where they know the Labour Party has amended the Race Relations Act 1976 to make it stronger? Even here, there are (Labour MPs) who show, in their behaviour, their prejudice.

Could you give some examples.

Yes. In many different ways. If I'm sitting here (in the House of Commons dining room) eating lunch by myself, and if there's a white MP sitting at another table, never mind if he's (opposition) Conservative. If a man or woman Labour MP comes up and want to sit with somebody, they'll go and sit with the other white MP.

But do you think that's more to do with ignorance of how people of other ethnic origin behave?

I find that even more hideous behaviour. If I come across a minister and I say hello, he'll just say 'hello' back. But if a white MP comes up, the minister will act chummy with him. That's what's happening here. The racist attitude of the human mind works in different ways.

Is that a reflection of the way social life and politics is conducted in Britain, which officially calls itself multicultural?

Even though the (Labour) party says we are anti-racist, you cannot change the behaviour of the people. They can vote for legislation to ban racism but they themselves have got this attitude, this germ within their heads.

You say this after nearly half-a-century in this country?

Yes. Asians are less assertive politically, especially non-Muslim Asians. Therefore, Labour has the tendency within the party structure to ignore them. Asians don't have that profile within the party.

But Labour has seven Asian MPs? Keith Vaz was once promoted to ministerial rank?

That was one individual. It is tokenism. Keith Vaz was a Cambridge graduate, a lawyer. He got a chance — as an individual. It wasn't that Labour wanted to offer Asians a place within the power structure.

But don't you think that's the best way? To reward individual excellence rather than an Asian quota?

I'm not in favour of a quota or positive discrimination. But, my constituency has the largest Labour membership in the country — 5,000 — for the last 10 years. Other constituencies have 500 on average. But if you look at Labour literature, all those flashy magazines from party headquarters, there is a lack of Asian faces. I'm disgusted. They know that Southall is a very important Asian community. But they never give us the profile.

Will there ever be the sort of acceptance of a British Asian here, as there was — for admittedly different reasons — of Sonia Gandhi? Many Indian villagers simply didn't care she was foreign-born.

The Indian electorate is more progressive than that of this country. If you have a person of a different colour here, the electorate will not support the party he or she leads.



Udayshankar

Q&A

The Indian electorate is more progressive than that of the UK. If you have a person of a different colour here, the electorate will not support the party he or she leads.

EDIT PAGE

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

We are thinking afresh on the situation in Gujarat. Leadership change is also an issue.

— A B Vajpayee

Atal on Modi?

BJP could take the cue from Manali musings

Cynics might well see Atalji's Manali confessions as a ploy to retrieve lost ground within the party and the polity. Genuinely so. A few days ago, addressing the first post-election BJP parliamentary party meeting, Vajpayee said the NDA's defeat had little to do with the violence in Gujarat. There was ample evidence to suggest otherwise. The Congress, despite the decrepit state of its organisation, won 12 seats in Gujarat. The BJP-Sena combine was swept out of Mumbai and Konkan. The spillover of Muslim anger had immensely benefited outfits like the Samajwadi Party, the BSP, and the RJD in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Not just BJP leaders like Shahnawaz Hussain, but allies like the Shiv Sena and Telugu Desam Party denounced Moditva as a factor that contributed to the losses. And yet, a fortnight later, Atalji has admitted to the Gujarat factor. But, then, isn't Vajpayee famous for his flip-flops? During a visit to Ahmedabad after the Gujarat pogrom, Vajpayee described the riots as shameful. Yet, he could ask at a party conclave in Goa: *aag kisne jalayee?* Atalji's admirers, undoubtedly, will describe all this as the quintessential dilemma of a liberal who is forced to compromise with the illiberal agenda of his political platform.

For the BJP, Vajpayee's Manali remarks couldn't have come at a better time. The party needs to rethink its politics. The Supreme Court has indicted the Modi government as well as the courts in the state for subverting the delivery of justice to the riot-affected. Modi should have resigned after the apex court compared his conduct to Nero fiddling when Rome was burning. Or Atalji could have called for his resignation. In Manali, Vajpayee talked about the need for the BJP to think of a new beginning. Modi's resignation could set the tone. Cooperating with the new government to ensure justice to the riot victims of Gujarat should be the next step. Verdict 2004, among many other things, was a vote against the politics of hate. It was the affirmation of the people's faith in a secular India. Vajpayee needs to send this message across to the BJP cadre. The party needs to go beyond mere tokenism if it is to win the trust of minorities. Educating the parivar on the politics of pluralism is never going to be easy. The sangh parivar has fired the first salvo with VHP's Praveen Togadia blaming soft Hindutva for the BJP's defeat. The occasion calls for Statesman Vajpayee to be *atal* in his latest position.

Left puts pressure on new Govt to reverse West Asia policy

New Delhi must not ally with Palestinian cause

In his seminal work, *The Question of Palestine*, the great Arabist Edward Said lamented the loss of interest in the cause of Palestine. He primarily blamed the Arabs for this, not to mention the

Tainted and Sainted

First Lot is Profane, Second Dangerous

By Alok Rai

Of course I can imagine a civilised Parliament and, with a little voice training, even Sushma Swaraj and Mamata Banerjee might be granted a place in it, provided they promise to keep their hair on. (And Jaitley of course — he looks so sincere!) But if all people with serious criminal charges against their names are to be excluded, it will be a very small Parliament indeed. The former home minister, we know, will be forced to stay at home. And this is the real reason why the BJP has dug up the quaintly religious idea of a "taint", whereby a flexible sort of distinction is sought to be established between different sorts of charges and different sorts of unconvicted crimes.

Thus, the Bihari Uddins, so to speak, are accused of offences like kidnapping, extortion and murder. And these are, beyond doubt, horrible crimes. And so the Uddins are deemed to be "tainted" merely by virtue of being accused of such heinous crimes. It is of course a damn pity, and an embarrassment, that these people have all been elected — rather like Advani and the infamous Modi. One may still try to base some kind of distinction on the grounds that one lot is elected because of their crimes, while the others are elected despite them. But I defy anyone to work out which is which. (Consider Shahabuddin: despite? because? Consider Modi: because? despite?...)



But election can hardly offer exemption from justice. Legislators cannot be presumed to be above the law, like policemen. We know, of course, that all of these people are still unconvicted — so perhaps we could just pick on the judicial system, and forget the whole messy business? But even this would be somewhat complicated by the fact that, until lately, Advani actually presided over the very department that was supposed to investigate and perhaps convict him! I suppose saints must be presumed to be above mere conflict of interest.

So, what is the real distinction between the tainted and the sainted — between say, Shahabuddin and, say, Advani? Somehow, the implication is that the former's crimes are worse than the latter's; that the latter's crimes are, in fact, not crimes at all. Vajpayee has been quoted to say that the cases of his colleagues were "of a different nature". He introduced the notion of a "political crime" that was fundamentally different from the "other" kind, thereby lending his authority to the idea of multiple standards.

Now, I hold no brief for the louts, those "ordinary" criminals — exclusion isn't enough, pull out their fingernails! But I wish to examine the arguments whereby Advani and M M Joshi and Uma Bharti, the Babri Three, are sought to be exempted from this necessary justice.

One can understand why the "sainted" are reluctant to name the tradition whose moral glamour they seek to invoke in their favour. This is the tradition of civil disobedience, associated indissolubly with the name of the assassinated Father of the Nation — assassinated, let us never forget, by a member of Advani's ideological fraternity. In civil disobedience, the law is broken publicly, declaredly, without violence and with the explicit political intent of subjecting the law to the critique of a higher, undeniable moral law. One thinks of Gandhi breaking colonial law on the beach at Dandi; of Martin Luther King breaking the segregationist, racist law in the southern US; of Mandela and apartheid...

It is of the very nature of such "law breaking" that conviction is a certainty — unless of course one is a home minister or a friend of the home minister! Gandhi, as every schoolboy knew — before Joshi got to work on the textbooks! — actually requested judge Broomfield to convict him. Though Vajpayee may claim that Advani's "crimes" are different, the fact of the matter is that Advani, unlike Gandhi, has actually sought to escape conviction — rather like the Bihari Uddins!

But, perhaps, there is something in Vajpayee's distinction after all. It is possible that the "crimes" of Advani et al are a distinct third category, distinct both from the common or garden crimes of the Uddins and from non-violent civil disobedience. The difference lies in the fact that these are calculated acts of public violence, executed in order to achieve political ends. The commonly available designation for such acts, I fear, is terrorism.

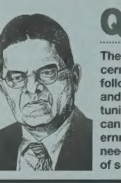
The violence of the Uddins is essentially about seizing property, and from a macro godlike perspective is arguably a zero sum game: your money, my pocket, that sort of thing! But the political violence associated with the proponents of "cultural nationalism" is radically different. When it rises "idealistically" above mundane intentions like clearing slum properties and benefiting land mafias, it aims at nothing less than kidnapping the nation, Constitution and all. The existing civil and criminal law — existing by virtue of the same Constitution — can hardly capture its fundamental enormity. After all, Germany barely survived the paroxysm of perverted Hitlerite nationalism in the 1930s. I believe that India 2004 has had a narrow escape from a similar fate: India, that is Bharat, that might have been Modi's Gujarat. Mere murderers are nothing compared to these men. And women. Of course, they must all, the tainted and the sainted, be convicted under the existing law. But it is only consonant with the moral altitude claimed by these "sainted" ones that they receive a "higher" sentence.

Minority View

An architectural historian at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 48-year-old ***Omar Khalidi****'s passion is the future of Indian Muslims. Hyderabad-born, Khalidi calls for Muslims to re-examine their sorry condition from within, rather than look for scapegoats.* ***M A Siraj*** *spoke to Khalidi who was on a lecture tour of India recently:*

You have studied the Indian Muslim situation for years. How does the community fit into the larger picture of India?

For the present, they do not fit into the tech-savvy, high income, self-confident India of the 21st century. Despite the famous Khans of the Bollywood, Infotech czar Premji, and the famed musicians, most Muslims are far poorer than their compatriots. Their stock in the political decision making is empty. Thin dispersal of the Muslims across the country prevents their numbers from being shown in legislative seats. Many constituencies with large Muslim voting population have been reserved for the SCs. Without some political leverage, public policies cannot be changed. The biggest Muslim concern today is physical security of life and property. Followed by economic and educational opportunities. For this one cannot blame the government alone. Muslims need a huge amount of self-introspection to find the lacunae.



Udayshankar

Q&A

The biggest Muslim concern today is security followed by economic and educational opportunities. For this one cannot blame the government alone. Muslims need a huge amount of self-introspection.

Have the Indian Muslims benefited from the socio-economic development of India in the post-Independence era?

No, they have not, but not because they are Muslims, but because the economic policies pursued by successive governments have benefited only the upper middle classes and the rich and leave out the rural poor, the urban slum dwellers, SCs and women. The Muslims become worse off because there is a political culture of indifference towards them. I say indifference — not discrimination — because Muslims do not have the political clout, which was lost in the wake of Pakistan's creation. They inherited the stigma for Pakistan's birth. So when public funds are distributed, there is a tendency to ignore them. The same policy would have been pursued in the case of the SCs, but they are protected by the policy of reservation at all levels. A new middle class emerged out of the ranks of the deprived SCs, far outpacing Muslims.

You once called for the 'Bohraisation' of Muslims.

By that I mean that Muslims ought to take more interest in trade, small businesses and self-employment. The era of flabby civil service is over. The path of upward social mobility is by entrepreneurship. In this venture, they have their own Prophet Mohammad as the role model. Don't forget that he and his wife were both merchants. And Bohras — whatever their sectarian beliefs are — have followed the example of the Prophet almost to the letter. The vast majority of the Bohras are small and medium businessmen and industrialists. Only a tiny number of Bohras are independent professionals. I have not heard of a Bohra in government employment, exceptions apart. The Aga Khani Khojas, Memons, Nawaits of Bhatkal in Karnataka, Tamil Labbais, Saudagaran of Delhi, Kolkata and UP and elsewhere can be good role models for other Muslims.

You have advanced the theory of 'cantonisation' of India and 'consociational power structure' in order to empower minorities. Could you explain these concepts?

'Cantonisation' may be misconstrued. What I mean is the democratic decentralisation as enshrined in our Constitution as recommended by the Sarkaria Commission of 1988. It will be economically efficient and satisfy ethnic, linguistic, sub-regional aspirations. The more India decentralises, the better it will be governed as the distance between the ruler and the ruled narrows. I see no harm if a state of 'Mewat' is created by merging the Meo-majority tehsils of Alwar and Bharatpur in Rajasthan with contiguous Meo-majority teh-sils of Gurgaon and Faridabad in Haryana on the lines of Jharkhand and Uttaranchal. A series of Urdu-majority Union territories — if not full-fledged states — can be created out of the districts of Bijnor, Moradabad, Rampur, Saharanpur in UP; out of Kishenganj, Katihar and Purnea in Bihar. The same is true of certain talukas of Bidar, Gulbarga, and Hyderabad in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. My model is of course Malappuram, carved out in 1969. Today, Malappuram is one of the peaceful and progressive districts in Kerala.

Consociational theory implies that the society recognises that the nation consists of various segments with legitimate religious and cultural demands, though not economic and educational. For each segment to be empowered, the electoral system must be revised to permit greater electability than is presently possible. I think, either the constituencies be demarcated in such a way that minority groups become majorities; or reserve seats on the pattern of the reserved constituencies presently available only to the SCs and the STs.

The difference with the separate electorates of the British would be that everyone in each constituency would be eligible to vote regardless of religious affiliation, though the candidates would be from a particular group, as is the case with the present reserved constituencies.

IN BRIEF

Fresh photos of Saturn moon: High-resolution pictures taken by the Cassini spacecraft during a flyby of Saturn's mysterious moon 'Phoebe' have shown scientists evidence that it hailed from the outer reaches of the solar system. The photographs released Sunday showed shiny patches, probably ice, on the battered moon that is dotted with overlapping craters of various size. AP

Maoists ban Hindi movies: The Maoist rebels have banned plying vehicles with Indian number plate and screening of Hindi movies in several districts in central Nepal from June 15 to 21. According to the Kathmandu post, Tamang Swayatta Krantikari Janaparishad, a Maoist-affiliated organization has issued the prohibition to protest against the arrest of their leaders by Indian security forces. Agencies

Space traveller: China hopes to send its first female astronaut into orbit by 2010 when the communist giant launches its maiden space station. The first female astronaut would work as a researcher at a planned Chinese space station, reports here said, adding that the pilots of China's spacecraft will still be men. China launched its first manned spacecraft, 'Shenzhou V' last October, to enter an exclusive club that consists of just the US and Russia. Agencies

Afghan militants held: US-led troops have held 90 suspected militants during the past three weeks in restive southeastern Afghanistan, a US official said on Monday. Earlier in the week, US military spokesman lieutenant Colonel Tucker Mansager said that coalition forces had killed more than 80 suspected militants in gunbattles and bombings in Deh Chopan. AFP

European voters batter ruling parties over Iraq war



Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) candidate Josep Borrell (centre), Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero (right) and Socialist Party speaker Jose Blanco pose at PSOE headquarters after his victory in the European elections in Madrid on Sunday

London: European voters punished leaders in Britain, the Netherlands, and to some degree Italy for getting involved in Iraq, but also turned their ire on German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac, Europe's leading opponents of the war, vote tallies showed on Monday. Many governments had a hard time in the 25-nation vote for the European Parliament, which ended with 19 nations voting on Sunday.

Among the few that did well were Spain's socialists, who recently withdrew troops from Iraq. The socialists, surprise victors in the March elections days after a massive terrorist attack, won a new stamp of legitimacy by emerging on top in the European parliamentary vote as well. The massive democratic exercise, spread out over four days, came at a crucial time in the development of the European Union: it has just added 10 members, largely from eastern Europe, and leaders hope to agree on a new constitution later this month.

Across Europe, the outcome highlighted anxieties about the expanding union, with anti-EU parties doing well in Britain, Sweden, and even the Czech Republic, in the former communist nation's maiden outing in an EU-wide vote. Overall, centre-right parties won, taking 274 seats in the 732-member European Parliament. The centre-left group, which includes lawmakers from British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour party and Schroeder's Social Democrats, finished second with 198 seats. The third-largest group in the European Union assembly was the Liberal Democrats with 64.

For some, the most remarkable outcome was the dismal level of participation: the 45.3 per cent turnout was the lowest ever in a European Parliament election, and just 28.7 per cent voted in the 10 newest states. Blair's Labour party performed weakly, coming in 5 percentage points behind the opposition Conservatives. Labour lost 6 percentage points from the last EU election to garner 22 per cent of the vote, while a fringe party that wants Britain to withdraw from EU came in third with 17 per cent.

Iraq was also an issue in the netherlands, where the deployment of 1,400 troops was a key issue in Thursday's vote. Preliminary results showed gains for leftist opposition parties; nonetheless, the government announced on Friday that it was extending the deployment for eight months.

A voter backlash on Iraq following the deadly train bombings in Madrid has already driven Aznar's party from power, and new socialist Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero hoped for a strong result to boost the impression that he won power on more than a protest vote. He got a narrow win, 43.3 per cent compared to 41.3 per cent for aznar's popular party, with 99 per cent of votes counted. Berlusconi's Forza Italia Party, the country's largest, got 21 per cent of the vote, down from 25.2 per cent in the previous european election, with results in from 90 per cent of polling stations.

Portugal's main opposition Socialist Party, which attacked the government over its unpopular support for the Iraq war and its patchy economic record, got a clear victory with 43% to 47% of the vote, compared to a maximum of 36% for the government partners, the Social Democratic Party and Popular Party. AP

Twelve killed in Iraq blast



A lone Iraqi throws a stone at a burning vehicle as others search the debris of a building at the scene of a car bomb blast in a main shopping area of Baghdad on Monday

Baghdad: Twelve people were killed, including five foreign contractors, and more than 50 others wounded on Monday when a car bomb exploded as three western-style vehicles drove down the city.

"Two British, one American, one French national and one Filipino were among the dead" in the rush-hour bombing on the east bank of the Tigris river, a diplomatic source said.

"Their bodies have been taken to a morgue at Baghdad airport," the diplomat said, adding that the five contractors had been working for the US company General Electric. Three other foreigners were wounded, said Iraqi Prime Minister Iyaq Allawi, adding they had been helping to rebuild Iraq's battered electricity sector.

In addition to the foreign casualties, at least seven Iraqis were killed and some 50 wounded in the bombing, according to a count compiled from three local hospitals.

A top policeman said: "It was a 3-car US convoy. A suicide car bomber in a small Volkswagen Brazilia drove between the cars and blew himself up". AFP

Pak arrests top Al Qaida terrorists

Islamabad: Smashing a major Al Qaida network, Pakistan police have arrested 13 hardcore militants, including nephew of the outfit's leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who they said were responsible for the recent violence in Karachi and the bid on the life of a top army general.

While a 11 member gang of Al Qaida saboteurs, mostly foreigners who were responsible for various attacks in the port city, including the one on army corps commander Ahsan Saleem was busted during the past two days, Pakistan police said two most wanted Al Qaida militants — Mosad Aroochi, nephew of Khalid Sheikh and Dawood Badini, a leader of Laskhar-e-Jhangvi were also held. Sindh province's police chief Kamal Shah said they have identified



AP

Amy Conroy (left) as 'Bella the Beauty' and Johnnie Kavanagh as 'Carny' entertain the folk on Dublin's main thoroughfare, O'Connell Street, which was closed and turned into an outdoor eatery for the Bloomsday Centenary breakfast on Sunday in commemoration of Leopold Bloom's famous morning meals in James Joyce's 'Ulysses' almost 100 years ago. Bloomsday falls on June 16

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